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# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**SOFT POWER AND ITS IMPACT ON U.S. INFLUENCE IN  
LATIN AMERICA**

by

Jason W. Cronin

December 2004

Thesis Advisor:  
Second Reader:

Harold A. Trinkunas  
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**SOFT POWER AND ITS IMPACT ON U.S. INFLUENCE IN LATIN AMERICA**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS**

from the

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## **ABSTRACT**

The role of Latin America in U.S. foreign policy has ebbed and flowed for over 100 years. Over the last 15 years, the relationship between the United States and Latin America has seen a precipitous drop in both cooperation and cordiality. The amicable relationships that the United States once enjoyed with Brazil and Venezuela specifically have become acrimonious. With the United States' increased interest in completing a Free Trade Area of the Americas agreement by January, relations with Brazil are vital. The United States' continued dependence on imported petroleum from Venezuela and America's concern over Venezuela's growing relationship with Cuba make this country also important to U.S. foreign policy.

The thesis focuses on the United States' ability to use its cultural influence (soft power) to positively effect U.S. relations with Brazil and Venezuela. By analyzing past and present effects of U.S. cultural influence in these two countries, the U.S. can better understand and appreciate the influence it wields as the world's only remaining super power. This thesis finds that despite historic evidence, the U.S. has had and continues to have a propensity to use soft power influence tactically, diminishing the effectiveness of its innate power and influence as being the global leader in military, economic, cultural, and technological matters. Conversely, the U.S. attempts to use its hard power (military and economic) strategically, thereby only breeding anti-Americanism globally.



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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This thesis examines the implementation of the United States' foreign policy towards neighboring Latin American countries, specifically Brazil and Venezuela. Over a period of almost 70 years, the United States has experienced a closer yet all-too-confusing relationship with its Latin American neighbors. The relationship has ebbed and flowed based on world events, regional concerns, and specific U.S. domestic policies that may or may not have had direct repercussions within Latin America. This thesis examines the foreign policy exercised by the United States within and toward Brazil and Venezuela, their different successes, effectiveness, and the longevity of the policies. The thesis also attempts to take into account the international events that influence regional politics. The analysis takes as its strategic point of departure the fact that the United States currently finds itself as the only global superpower in the world.

The status of the United States as a world economic and cultural hegemon, in addition to its military preponderance, provides it with a wide range of mechanisms with which to influence other countries. Does a more indirect application of U.S. influence through cultural and diplomatic means have an impact on the success or failure of U.S. policies in Latin America? Cultural and political 'influence' has certainly had an affect on the success of U.S. policies in the past, it does in the present, and it certainly could in the future. The hypothesis that this thesis proposes is that the United States is currently overemphasizing its military and economic power, thereby only reinforcing deep-rooted negative attitudes about itself. These attitudes are reflected in the sentiment among many Latin Americans that the United States' only national interest is its own economic advancement. The thesis also argues that its cultural influence (soft power) vice its economic or military might (hard power), is a more effective means of improving popular and longer-term attitudes in Latin America towards the United States.

An improvement in Latin Americans' attitudes at the grassroots level through soft power application allows the Latin American leaders to more easily negotiate agreements with the United States. The primary method for accomplishing this would be by increasing the win-set of potential acceptable outcomes for their constituents. This

increase in the win-set in turn would lead to new opportunities for cooperation. The change in policy practice methodology by the United States will lead to a greater number of potential solutions in the two-level foreign policy game<sup>1</sup> for Latin American leaders and thereby improve the environment for ensuring long term U.S. interests.

## **A. COUNTRY BACKGROUNDS**

The United States finds itself at a very interesting point in world history. At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, contemporary reports, periodicals, publications, and books constantly refer to the United States as ‘an empire’.<sup>2</sup> These sources range from *Foreign Affairs* and *International Affairs*, to the *Journal of European Economic History* and the *Journal of Peace Research*. The United States’ economic, social, cultural, commercial, technological, and military power are unmatched as any this globe has ever seen in over a millennium. It could even be argued that not since the Roman Empire has one nation been so dominant over its next closest global competitor. What can be unique unto the United States is how it chooses to use its disproportionate power advantage.<sup>3</sup> The choices it makes on the uses of its enormous strength and influential differential, may determine whether the United States remains a global leader for the next five years or the next 500 years.

This thesis will examine the choices the United States has made in the usage and application of its hard power and soft power toward Latin America, specifically Brazil and Venezuela. Latin America, as a region, makes an excellent laboratory for examining U.S. choices for several reasons. Latin America is an area of the world where the United States’ power advantage over potential rivals has long been disproportionate and a region of the world where there are numerous examples of U.S. applications of both hard and soft power used to achieve specific interests. Additionally, Brazil and Venezuela make

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<sup>1</sup> The ‘two-level game’ is a reference to Robert Putnam’s (1988) theory. The theory simply states that negotiations at an international level must be simultaneously carried out at two levels. One level of negotiations occurs among the national actors while another, parallel, set of negotiations occurs between the state’s negotiators and its various applicable domestic constituents.

<sup>2</sup> Joffe, J. (2000, Summer). Who’s Afraid of Mr. Big? *The National Interest*, 43.

<sup>3</sup> There are some theorists who would argue that superpowers are not at liberty to be able to ‘choose’ the type of course or action in which to exercise its foreign policy. The assumption is that as a superpower, the nation or country is forced to act as a superpower and is therefore predisposed to act in the manner in which its role on the world stage is viewed. This author is not attempting to argue the merits or weaknesses of this particular theory. This section of the thesis is merely making a general statement as to the potential or possibility of taking another course of action for the sake of this analytical discussion.

excellent case studies based on the political and economic history they have with the U.S. In addition to the historical aspect, these countries share current issues of national and international political and economic significance.

## **1. Brazil**

Brazil has been specifically chosen based on several factors. One obvious factor is Brazil's sheer size and relatively close proximity to the United States.<sup>4</sup> Another factor making Brazil an interesting case study is the long history shared between the United States and Brazil, since Brazil declared its independence in 1822. In fact, the United States was the first country to officially recognize Brazil's independence from Portugal. Since that time, the two have had a long and intertwined history. Arguably the most current factor making Brazil keenly important to the United States is that Brazil represents a very large economic trading bloc. Not only is Brazil a large trading factor in its own right, but is also the clear and indisputable leader of Mercosur.<sup>5</sup>

Brazil is important to the United States in specific regard to the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) agreement. Brazil is important on several levels. The first level of importance is based on the fact that Brazil is the Co-Chairman with the United States in negotiations over the FTAA agreement, scheduled to be concluded by January 2005. On a separate but strictly national level, Brazil, and therefore the FTAA, represents what could be a very large economic boom for the U.S. economy. On a regional level, Brazil's GDP is the largest in Latin America (to include Mexico). In fact, Brazil's GDP makes up over one-third of the entire GDP of Latin America.<sup>6</sup> Globally, issues discussed with the U.S. in the context of FTAA have ramifications in the World Trade Organization (WTO). The FTAA could definitely assist the United States' economic situation. What the U.S. needs to do is ensure its approach toward Brazil is appropriate and effective.

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<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that despite Brazil's relative size, almost that of the contiguous United States, a very large proportion of that area is consumed by the Amazon jungle. This portion of Brazil is very sparsely populated, leaving the majority of the population along the coast.

<sup>5</sup> Mercosur is the economic and commercial trading block countries of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay.

<sup>6</sup> WIKIPEDIA: The Free Encyclopedia. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page). Last accessed November 09, 2004.



## **2. Venezuela**

Venezuela is also important to the United States concerning multiple issues. The most obvious issue involving Venezuela and the United States is oil. Venezuela currently represents the second largest oil reserve in the world and is the third or fourth largest oil supplier to the U.S.<sup>7</sup> Any disruption to the Venezuelan oil supply, as demonstrated during Venezuela's 2002 strikes and subsequent coup attempt, would have a crippling effect on the U.S. economy. The importance of Venezuelan oil is made even more poignant in light of the difficulties in the Middle East, specifically Iraq.

Another issue underpinning Venezuela's importance and impact on the United States' political landscape is its relationship with Cuba. Because Venezuela is the longest consistently running democracy in South America, its relationship with Cuba makes many U.S. policymakers all the more concerned. Venezuela's long, predominantly peaceful, and resilient history with the U.S. makes the rapidity and familiarity of its relations with Cuba even more disturbing. While Venezuela in and of itself may not appear to be very significant to the U.S. as a single country, its petroleum reserves and cursory political ties to countries such as Cuba could have devastating and long term repercussions.

### **B. DEFINING HARD POWER AND SOFT POWER**

As the author Joseph Nye originally argued over 10 years ago, power can be viewed and discussed in terms of either behavioral or resource power.<sup>8</sup> Nye defined Resource Power as the possession of resources associated with the ability to reach outcomes you want. These resources providing this type of power come in many different forms, including the type, size, or fashion of populations, territory, agricultural, or mineral resources.<sup>9</sup> The United States has an abundance of most if not all of these 'resource powers' available to it.

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<sup>7</sup> Energy Information Administration (2004, April). *United States of America: Country Analysis*. Retrieved from <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/usa.html>, last accessed November 10, 2004.

<sup>8</sup> Keohane, R. O. and Nye, J. S. Jr. (1998, Sept./Oct.). Power and Interdependence in the Information Age. *Foreign Affairs*, 77, 5, 81.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp 83.

Behavioral Power is a theoretical power that can be further delineated into *Hard Power* and *Soft Power*.<sup>10</sup> It is these two types of power that this thesis addresses and how the United States should look at its foreign policy options in Latin America. **Hard power** is described as the ability to get others to do what they would not do otherwise through threats, rewards, or whether it was done through “economic carrots or military sticks.”<sup>11</sup> Hard power is not strictly a reference to a country’s military capability, however. Hard power is anything that has the ability to change another entity’s original venue through exerting, cajoling, enticing, or coercing. Under this premise, even certain types of economic aid could therefore be classified as hard power under certain specifications, conditions, or contingencies. **Soft power** is the ability to get desired outcomes because others want what you want. Proper use and application of soft power is the ability to achieve goals through attraction rather than coercion. Through the use of soft power, one is able to convince others to follow or agree to norms producing desired behavior from the entity that is applying the said soft power: “It (Soft power) co-opts people rather than coerces them.”<sup>12</sup>

Soft power can rest on the appeal of one’s ideas or culture, particularly if a state or organization can make its own power appear legitimate in the eyes of others. Ideally, a particular nation or institution will try to establish international standards that encourage other nations or people to define their own interests in compatible ways. If that is done successfully, then that state or organization will not need to expend as many costly traditional hard power resources (economic or military) as would otherwise be necessary in attempting to effectively influence its targeted object or audience. Soft power can vary over time, over different domains, as well as from culture to culture. The subtle yet successful spread of American<sup>13</sup> popular culture (American products, technology, food, music, fashion, movies, etc.) has generally increased global awareness of and openness

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<sup>10</sup> Keohane, R. O. and Nye, J. S. Jr. (1998, Sept./Oct.). Power and Interdependence in the Information Age. *Foreign Affairs*, pp 82.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Nye, J. S. Jr. (2002/2003, Winter). Limits of American Power. *Political Science Quarterly*, 117, 4, 548.

<sup>13</sup> ‘America’ or ‘American’ will be used interchangeably to mean the United States of America unless otherwise specifically delineated.

toward American ideas and values. America's soft power influence has not been so much an intentional goal as an inadvertent byproduct of its cultural and economic success.

It is important to note that soft power must be credible to be effective. Media influence in the venue of lending publicity and credibility can aid in providing and developing a country's or organization's soft power. CNN provided a perfect example of this after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 and, intentionally or not, helped shape the world's opinion of the invasion. This assertion is based on two assumptions. The first assumption is that CNN operates as an American organization and the second is that CNN is truly global in its effectiveness and reach. Based on these assumptions, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was interpreted and reported world wide as a blatant and unprovoked attack on another country's legitimate sovereignty. CNN was the only news organization at the time with the reach to provide global penetration of the world viewing audience.<sup>14</sup>

If the global news station had been Al Jazeera the strike into Kuwait may have been interpreted and reported totally different. Theoretically, Al Jazeera could have reported Iraq's incursion into Kuwait as nothing more than Iraq carrying out a long overdue colonial correction when Kuwait was unjustifiably taken from Iraq and illegally given its independence by the old British Empire.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps fortunately for the United States, Al Jazeera was not in existence during the initial Gulf War.<sup>16</sup> The credibility of, and soft power exerted by, CNN made the subsequent invasion of Iraq by a United Nations (UN) coalition in 1991 seem completely justifiable almost world wide. Contrast this CNN influence to the extent and influence of Al Jazeera after only eight years in existence. Based on the current U.S. led coalition's assault in Iraq and the view being portrayed through Al Jazeera today and one can see this influence in action. What this paper concentrates on is how the United States misuses its hard power and how it can

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<sup>14</sup> While the BBC provides worldwide viewership as well, it is also Western based and therefore Western-biased in its general views.

<sup>15</sup> Keohane, pp 83.

<sup>16</sup> Al Jazeera was established in 1996 with a \$150 million grant from the emir of Qatar, where the broadcasting company is still based. Its viewership rivals that of the BBC and is one of the, if not 'the', most watched news organization in the Middle East.

more effectively apply its soft power. Again, the goal of the United States is to influence Latin America through the ability to co-opt versus coerce.

### **C. BASIC PREMISE**

Early after World War II in the fight against communism, the newly created CIA began funding ‘cultural diplomacy’. The term is loosely intended to convey organizational attempts at influencing entire cultures. The methods employed by the U.S. government and the CIA during and shortly after WWII would be woefully inappropriate by today’s standards and values. The methods do however serve as a reminder of how serious Washington once took the ideological war against the Soviet Union and the promotion of democratic ideals, particularly in Latin America (in theory if not in practice).<sup>17</sup> This chapter of United States’ foreign policy history should be reviewed and reassessed. This author is not recommending using the CIA and covert operations to attempt the changing of minds of an entire hemisphere. By reviewing the effectiveness of previous attempts at soft power applications though, important lessons can be extracted from this less-than-proud period of U.S history. The United States needs to retake the role of leader in the dissemination of democratic ideals, values, culture, and ethics to the rest of the world. How that influence can be accomplished most effectively is discussed in this thesis with specific reference to the case studies of U.S.-Brazil and U.S.-Venezuela relations.

In the last 15 years alone, there have been huge strides in the development of telecommunications, Internet, and the cheap flow of information and ideas. Soft power is therefore becoming a simpler, more compelling, and powerful means of power projection into other countries and cultures than ever before. As the former U.S. ambassador to the UN once said, “Armed guards can keep people from crossing borders, but they cannot keep out ideas.”<sup>18</sup>

There is a simple, sad, but poignant example of the power to co-opt and soft power’s ability to effectively influence at the very grass-roots level (and thereby

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<sup>17</sup> Finn, H. K. (2003, November/December). The Case for Cultural Diplomacy: Engaging Foreign Audiences. *Foreign Affairs*, 82, 6, 15.

<sup>18</sup> Max M. Kampelman, M. M. (2003, August 1). U.S. Presence Abroad: Power and Principle. *Vital Speeches of the Day*, 69, 20, 620. Kampelman, Former Ambassador to the UN, delivered at the Center for the Study of the Presidency, Washington, D.C., June 13, 2003.

effectively influencing entire cultures). The example is of just how many individuals are willing to become martyrs and suicide bombers for radical groups. Based merely on the strength of a group's ideas, cultural principles, or ideals, neither the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) nor Al Qaeda seem to be having much difficulty in recruiting people to die for their causes. This type of recruitment is done through effective application of the organization's soft power ideology and is thereby able to leverage a much greater scale of the global society despite each organizations relatively small size and operating budgets.

Freedom House reports that currently there exists the largest percentage of the world population living under democracy or near-democracy than at any other time in human history – 63%.<sup>19</sup> This large percentage indicates an opportunity, though fleeting, for the United States to have a truly globalizing effect if it so chooses. The United States needs to take the lead in the distribution of its lofty democratic ideals and it should be starting with some of its closes neighbors and once strong allies, Brazil and Venezuela.

#### **D. IMPORTANCE**

Over the last 15 years, the relationship between the United States and Latin America has seen a precipitous drop in both cooperation and cordiality. Additionally, over the last several years the United States has seen a general but definitive left shift in Latin American politics. The shift is represented in Brazil by the presidential election of Labor Union leader, President Lula de Silva. Venezuelan politics has also demonstrated an analogous shift away from mainstream democracy when its citizens democratically elected a former coup leader and previous Army Lieutenant Colonel, President Hugo Chavez Frias. This left shift tendency is corroborated by the most recent election of President Tabare Vazquez of Uruguay in October 2004. President Vazquez is the first leftist leader to be elected president in Uruguay's history.<sup>20</sup> It appears that Latin America is currently in the midst of a regional political shift. If the United States is to have any long term influence in the new political arena, it needs to consider other options than strictly hard power coercive practices.

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<sup>19</sup> Kampelman, pp 622.

<sup>20</sup> BBC News, UK Ed. *Country Profile: Uruguay*. Retrieved from [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/country\\_profiles/1229360.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/country_profiles/1229360.stm), last accessed November 09, 2004.

The situation between the United States and Venezuela specifically, has only worsened over the last two years. When the recent presidential referendum vote was returned on President Chavez, despite the apparent lack of support on the part of the United States, the definitive majority of Venezuelans showed a confidence vote in favor of allowing Chavez to finish out his term in office. Despite the accusations by anti-Chavez groups, multiple international organizations ruled the referendum as being fair and accurate. The cordial relationships that the United States previously enjoyed with both Brazil and Venezuela have become much less harmonious.

With the United States' increased interest in completing a Free Trade Area of the Americas agreement by January 2005 (with Brazil and the United States Co-Chairing the negotiations until the deadline) and the United States' continued dependence on imported petroleum from Venezuela, the relations with these two specific countries become all the more important. For the United States to successfully encourage a free trade regional agreement and ensure continued favorable relations with one of its main petroleum suppliers, it needs to rethink its political relationship and public diplomacy approach throughout the region. How the United States chooses to approach these issues will determine whether its regional influence increases in order to help promote free trade and enhance democratic ideals or whether the U.S. approach only manages to increase regional tensions to the breaking point.

## **E. METHODOLOGY**

The case study method will be used to examine the effects of soft power application in Brazil and Venezuela. The format to be used for the case studies will be the *congruence procedure*.<sup>21</sup> The congruence procedure allows the author to compare hard and soft power applications and effectiveness (or acceptance) of U.S. policies at different time periods in each of the case studies. In each set of circumstances, there are specific examples of hard power treatments being used. The effectiveness of the hard power applications will be analyzed from different historical perspectives, polls, and sources, as well as other independent studies analyzing changes in attitudes and perceptions toward the U.S, past and present.

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<sup>21</sup> Stephen Van Evera, S. (1997). Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 58-63.

A wide variety of primary sources will be gathered for both case studies involving Brazil and Venezuela. Some of these sources include interviews in Brazil and the United States, and recently declassified CIA and governmental documents. Interviews have been conducted among a wide range of civilian, military, and governmental agencies from both Venezuela and Brazil. To better isolate the effects of hard and soft power, there will also be extensive research of secondary sources concerning military operations, international events, past presidential policies, and economic coercion in the region on the part of the United States (all examples of hard power application).

## **F. THESIS ORGANIZATION**

Chapter II of this thesis will focus on Brazil. In the early part of the relationship, Brazil was the only country in Latin America to send troops in support of U.S. and Allied Forces against the Axis powers in Europe.<sup>22</sup> As late as 1965, Brazil even sent troops into the Dominican Republic as a show of support. Since that time, the relationship has digressed to the point where the two countries are now in an acrimonious stalemate over a free trade agreement that could greatly increase the prosperity of both countries. Why did Brazil decide to distance itself from the U.S. within a period of only a few years? Chapter II will help explain what caused a solid relationship between the U.S. and Brazil prior to WWII to change.

This chapter will review and analyze U.S. – Brazilian relations from World War II to the present in three specific time segments. The first time segment will focus from the late 1930s to 1964. The research will review the U.S. foreign policy techniques used by the U.S. and trace changes in Brazilian attitudes toward the United States during this period. The second period to be studied covers from 1965 to 1991. In this period, the U.S. moved away from a predominantly soft power approach in favor of a more neutral and distant stance from Brazil specifically and Latin America in general. The thesis will look at the effects of the Cold War and its policy implementation toward Brazil. The final period is 1991 to the present. During this period the thesis will address current and changing U.S. policies towards Brazil, the motivations, and the political relationships between the two countries.

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<sup>22</sup> While Brazil is currently heading a UN force in Haiti, its motivation is completely different now than it was 40 years ago, and should not be considered within the same context.

Chapter III will be a case study on Venezuela. The chapter will review the historic interactions between Venezuela and United States, but will predominantly focus on the period since the presidential election of President Hugo Chavez. A large percentage of the research on this time period will focus on the increasingly close relationship, both personally and politically, between President Hugo Chavez and Cuban leader Fidel Castro. There are currently thousands of Cuban doctors, teachers, aid workers, and ‘advisors’ in Venezuela. Cuba’s ability to assert its own form of soft power through co-option of the Venezuelan public rather than through coercion may be having a greater affect on the hearts and minds of the Venezuelan public than most policy makers in Washington realize.

The current principal method of influence by the United States’ in Venezuela is through purchasing copious amounts of oil. In this manner the United States provides the Venezuelan government with a large source of revenue. This common method of influence may not be the most effective form of encouraging closer long-term relations with Venezuela. Is Cuba’s current *soft power* application trumping the United States’ more traditional means of international influence? The thesis will address this.

Tracing the effectiveness of Cuba’s soft power application may demonstrate that despite the United States’ military and economic superiority and undisputed global hegemony, it may be soft power that is proving to be a much more effective means of influence. The research will review and analyze the approaches the U.S. practiced in Venezuela and what effect it had on the Venezuelan elites as well as the general public. What affect if any did the different forms of influence (hard Vs soft power) have? Also being considered in the Venezuelan case study is the relationship Venezuela had with Cuba before Cuban volunteers began entering the country a few years ago. The author will examine links between soft power application and the changing attitudes of Venezuelans not just toward the United States, but also toward Cuba.

The fourth and final chapter is a synthesis chapter as well as a conclusion. The research on Brazil and Venezuela will be analyzed to look at U.S. foreign policy in the specific country and what affect those policies had on the countries and its relations with the U.S. The thesis conclusion will then look at the two countries as a comparison to



ascertain the existence of any relationships between soft power application and improvements in Latin American attitudes toward the United States. The research will analyze any similarities between the two case studies to better construct causal relationships and discuss conditional or intervening variables in either one. Based on these comparative findings, the thesis will make recommendations to the State Department concerning methods in changing its political approach towards Brazil and Venezuela to better ensure favorable political outcomes.

## **II. BRAZIL**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Since Brazil's independence from Portugal in 1822, the United States and Brazil have enjoyed relatively close relations. The U.S. was the first country to recognize Brazil's independence immediately following the announcement of its secession from Portugal. The relationship, while not always completely amicable, has served both countries through difficult times in peace and war.

This chapter will specifically look at U.S.-Brazilian relations within three specific time intervals and America's use of hard and soft power as applicable in each. The first time interval will be from the mid-1930s until 1964. This period will look at the political and economic ties of these two countries from just prior to World War II until the end of Brazilian democratic rule in 1964.

The second phase will focus on the period from 1965 until 1991. The period will look at U.S.-Brazil relations in the context of and as a factor of the Cold War. The time interval will also look at the economic and political transitions in Brazil and America's role during that era. The period analysis will conclude just after Brazil's transition from its military dictatorship back to a democracy.

The third and final interval discussed is from 1991 until the present. This discussion concentrates on three specific factors: (1) U.S. tactics and relations with Brazil in the context of the United States becoming the only global superpower after the collapse of the Soviet Union; (2) Brazil's attempts at establishing itself as a regional hegemon in its own right, and; (3) the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) agreement and how U.S.-Brazil relations will affect the final outcome of such an all-encompassing trade pact.

All three time intervals cover important factors in both countries' history. The type of influence the U.S. used (hard power and soft power) had very profound and lasting affects on both countries and their relationship. All aspects provide valuable

lessons for the United States to consider and upon which to reflect in the United States' continuing struggle for increased influence and relations in Brazil specifically, and Latin America in general.

## **B. BRAZIL: 1930S TO 1964**

The phrase best describing America's attempted change in attitude toward Latin America during this period would be President Franklin D. Roosevelt's 'Good Neighbor Policy'. It was formally introduced in March 1933 with great hope and anticipation for better relations with the leaders of Latin America.<sup>23</sup> Despite the Good Neighbor Policy though, the years preceding WWII became an era of conflicting U.S. policies for the sake of national security. With the war in Europe looming precariously close, U.S. national security took precedence over any attempt to establish simple, consistent, or straightforward political objectives in the specific countries of Latin America. The primary U.S. objective in that region, contrary to the seemingly vacillating foreign policies at the time, was not so much to perpetuate democracy as it was to foster consistency and stability within the entire hemisphere for the purpose of increasing the security of the United States.

In the early 1930s as the world was preparing for hostilities, Brazilian President Getulio Vargas skillfully played Germany's interest against the United States' interest for the economic benefit of Brazil.<sup>24</sup> Many officials in the U.S. State Department at the time attempted to pass harsh sanctions against Brazil for its 'double-dealing' practices. Resisting increasing pressure from Congress to take hard power economic action against Brazil, U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull, chose a more *soft* or conciliatory approach. He feared that applying hard power sanction might induce the resource-rich and strategically located nation to consider more cooperative tendencies towards the Axis powers.

Brazil was finally forced to make a decision between Germany and the United States after Germany declared war on the United States and Great Britain on December

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<sup>23</sup> U.S. Department of State (1943). Peace and War: United States Foreign Policy 1931-1941. Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 323-329.

<sup>24</sup> Gilderhus, M. T. (2000). The Second Century: U.S.-Latin American Relations Since 1889. Scholarly Resources Inc., 82.

11, 1941.<sup>25</sup> As a partial result of Secretary of State Hull's soft power or conciliatory approach toward Brazil, Brazil eventually sided with the United States despite the fact that an Allied victory was far from a forgone conclusion.<sup>26</sup>

Between 1935 and 1947, the U.S. used multiple techniques in its attempts to influence Brazil and ensure the country's continued cooperation during global hostilities. Some of these techniques included more traditional political channels such as financial inducements, discriminatory economic practices, and political ceremonial snubs.<sup>27</sup> Each of these different techniques was an application of hard power. This is based on the intent of the policies to force or coerce Brazil into acting in a particular direction or manner. Conversely, the United States applied soft power in its generous agreement to provide Brazil funding for the construction of a vital steel mill. The steel mill was intended to dramatically assist Brazil in its move toward its own industrial revolution. It was soft power gestures such as these that aided the Brazilian government into justifying to the rest of the country why it continued to support the United States over Germany.

The soft power gestures by the U.S. toward Brazil were having positive effects on the general Brazilian population. The influence that the United States began wielding based on the assistance to Brazil in infrastructure development was greater than any probable ideological leanings or commonalities that may have existed between the two countries at the time. Therefore, despite Brazil's authoritarian run government and its desire to demonstrate a propensity for democracy merely for the sake of garnering closer ties with the U.S., it was not this that encouraged such closeness between the two countries. It was the positive soft power effects of American social and cultural influence that convinced most Brazilians that closer ties with the U.S. would be a more beneficial endeavor.

After the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the United States enjoyed strong support from Brazil as well as the rest of Latin America. The strong support could be more directly attributed to the general good will felt toward the

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<sup>25</sup> Author unknown. Retrieved from <http://www.worldwar2history.info/1942.html>, last accessed November 30, 2004.

<sup>26</sup> Gilderhus, pp 83.

<sup>27</sup> Gilderhus, pp 85.

U.S. due to the cooption vice coercion than out of any real sympathy for the loss of American lives. The popularity of the newly instituted Good Neighbor Policy more than marginally affected the positive attitude of Latin Americans.<sup>28</sup> It is important to note that Brazil was so supportive of the U.S. and Allied forces that it was the only Latin American country to back the Allies directly with troops in European combat by having its military fighting in Italy.<sup>29</sup>

Trade was another soft power approach used by the U.S. to help influence Brazil. The United States directly aided Brazil's economic recovery after 1941 through enormously expanded mutual trade agreements. With recommendations from the U.S. and assistance by the U.S., the Inter-American Coffee Agreement was ratified in April 1941. What this agreement did was attempt to prevent the devastating and destructive competitive practices among the hemisphere's leading coffee producers trying to maximize the dwindling profits in a war torn global economy. The U.S. promised Brazil specifically, an above-market price for its coffee and a larger share of the U.S. market.<sup>30</sup> Using a soft power approach to economic and political cooperation with Brazil, helped ensure Brazil's continued cooperation with the U.S.

In addition to overtly beneficial political practices executed for Brazil, the U.S. also extended more subtle examples of influence to ensure continued cooperation. In July 1941, President Roosevelt established the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA) headed by Nelson A. Rockefeller. The organization's explicit purpose was to "provide for the development of commercial and cultural relations between the American Republics..."<sup>31</sup> The precise intent was to formulate and execute programs in support of United States national defense by strengthening the relationships of the countries within the western hemisphere. The methods necessary to accomplish some of these goals involved the use of subtle commercial and economic techniques. Other mediums used to accomplish bilateral and regional *cooption* were the

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<sup>28</sup> Gilderhus, pp 96.

<sup>29</sup> Gilderhus, pp 99.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Civilian Agency Records – Department of State and Foreign Affairs Records. Records of the Office of Inter-American Affairs (RG 229). Retrieved from [http://www.ushmm.org/uiia-cgi/uiia\\_doc/art/x10-41?hr=null](http://www.ushmm.org/uiia-cgi/uiia_doc/art/x10-41?hr=null), last accessed August 15, 2004.

arts and sciences, educational programs, travel opportunities, radio, press, and even cinema. The Roosevelt administration truly believed that culture conscious intellectual and societal understanding would provide or lead to economic and political cooperation in Brazil.<sup>32</sup> President Roosevelt felt strongly enough about the need to promote ideological and cultural persuasion that the initial budget of \$3.5 million in 1941 for OCIAA was increased to \$38 million just one year later.<sup>33</sup> The years between the late 1940s and the mid 1950s were full of origination and formalization of organizations and Acts in attempts to favorably influence Brazil and the rest of Latin America as to the *goodness* of the United States. The new governmental agencies were developed in particular to combat the anti-American propaganda being conducted specifically by the Soviet Union in the region at the time.

In 1948, the U.S. Congress enacted the Smith-Mundt Act to counter Soviet propaganda in an attempt to ‘sell’ America to the world.<sup>34</sup> In 1950, President Truman directed Secretary of State Acheson to prepare a vigorous “Campaign of Truth” as a U.S. offensive in response to Communist ‘lies’.<sup>35</sup> The Department of State established the International Information Administration (IIA) in 1952 in response to increasing concerns and threats in the area of psychological warfare.<sup>36</sup> On July 31, 1953, President Eisenhower created the United States Information Agency (USIA) as a soft power foreign policy tool to be used in conjunction with hard power diplomatic, military, and economic policy. “The primary purpose [of the USIA] was to persuade foreign people that it was in their own interest to follow the lead of the United States...”<sup>37</sup> Between 1942 and 1946, Disney® produced over a dozen short cartoons widely distributed throughout the hemisphere with the explicit intent of improving U.S.-Brazilian relations through the use

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<sup>32</sup> Haines, G. K. (1977, Fall). Under the Eagle’s Wing: The Franklin Roosevelt Administration Forges an American Hemisphere. *Diplomatic History*, I, 378-379.

<sup>33</sup> Gilderhus, pp 104.

<sup>34</sup> Haines, G. K. (1989). The Americanization of Brazil: A Study of U.S. Cold War Diplomacy in the Third World, 1945-1954. Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc., 160.

<sup>35</sup> U.S. Department of State (1948, November 28). Helping the World to Know Us Better. *Bulletin*, 19, 672.

<sup>36</sup> Haines, pp 161.

<sup>37</sup> Haines, pp 161.

of this soft power medium.<sup>38</sup> The topics dealt with by the Disney® cartoons ranged from the archetypal concerning the ‘great’ Amazon and ‘wonderful’ South American life, to less traditional topics such as the importance of grain to the war effort and the importance of national defense against invasion.<sup>39</sup> Even Hollywood supported the U.S. government in its attempts to ameliorate western hemisphere relations for the benefit of the U.S. war effort.

To counter heavy communism propaganda, the U.S. also resorted to a more direct means of influencing Latin Americans and Brazilians. Economically the United States, more broadly than just via coffee, opened itself to Latin America providing more direct assistance to its economic and cultural ‘development’. Between 1933 and 1945 the United States signed 15 Latin American trade reciprocity agreements. 11 of these 15 agreements were enacted before 1940. One of the advantages was increased production and a better standard of living in Brazil. In fairness, some of these agreements also served the important purpose of tying Latin America’s continued progress directly to the U.S. This also ensured mutual cooperation with U.S. policies at a very critical time in world history.<sup>40</sup> In this example of U.S. policies, both soft power and hard power were applied for a mutual gain by both parties.

After WWII and Harry S. Truman’s entrance into the presidential office, the urgency and necessity of maintaining Brazil as a happy and loyal ally to win the war quickly diminished. Much to the chagrin of Brazilians, they stopped getting the attention, funds, and recognition they felt they so deserved based on the country’s efforts, troop commitment, and full cooperation with the United States. Not only did the United States refuse to provide any type of Marshall Plan for Latin America as Brazil had hoped, but Brazil was all but shut out of WWII peace negotiations. Additionally, Brazil received no acknowledgement for its request for a permanent seat on the Security Council. Once the war was won and the United States no longer needed Brazil for the survival of the United States, the assumption was that Brazil had become merely another tool to be used by the

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<sup>38</sup> *The Encyclopedia of Disney Animated Shorts*. Retrieved from <http://disneyshorts.toonzone.net/miscellaneous/commerciallisting.html>, last accessed August 15, 2004.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Gilderhus, pp 83.

United States. Brazil like the rest of Latin America felt like mere instruments utilized to help the United States execute whatever political policy it wanted to complete.<sup>41</sup>

What Brazil did get was a new war – the Cold War and the paranoia associated with the perceived threat of Communism.<sup>42</sup> One of the more frustrating aspects of the new Cold War was mentioned by the Ambassador from Brazil, Joao Carlos Muniz, when he asked as to why would the United States use economic aid and assistance (soft power) to fight communism in Europe, but choose police and coercive tactics (hard power) in Latin America.<sup>43</sup>

Starting in the late 1950s, Brazil quickly became frustrated with the United States'. America's changing attitude and approach toward Brazil after the war, its complete lack of support for Brazil's request as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, and the increasing use of hard power in its dealings with Brazil, led Brazil to change its views and approach toward the U.S. Under the leadership of President Kubitschek, Brazil began altering its international role in hemispheric politics. Brazil's foreign policy moved away from inter-dependence on the U.S. and focused more on expanded international cooperation and independence from the U.S.<sup>44</sup> Instead of maintaining its traditional role as mediator between Latin America and the U.S., Brazil moved toward being the Latin American advocate, thereby putting it at direct odds with the United States in an ever-increasing quantity.<sup>45</sup>

The United States saw Brazil's precipitous move to the political left as a major concern over the apparently increasing influence of communism in its executive branch. It also provided an excellent excuse to take action against an increasingly difficult and uncooperative 'partner'. Under the nationalistic policies of Kubitschek, and then even more so under his successor President Janio Quadros, the United States became indirectly involved in the military coup of the democratically elected Brazilian government.

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<sup>41</sup> Cepik, Dr. Marco (2004, October 26). Visiting Brazilian professor at the Naval Postgraduate School. Interview with author.

<sup>42</sup> Gilderhus, pp 83.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., pp 152.

<sup>44</sup> Roett, R. (1972). Brazil: Politics in a Patrimonial Society. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 171.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., pp 193-194.



After only a few months in office, Brazil's President, Janio Quadros, resigns and is democratically replaced in 1960 by Joao Goulart. The rapid and tumultuous turn over of power to Quadros' left-wing vice-president did nothing to alleviate the concerns of the U.S. The degree of direct involvement by the United States in the subsequent overthrow of Brazil's democratically elected President in 1964 is debatable. The United States did however move multiple naval ships into a position off Brazil's coast in case the military junta needed re-supplying of its offensive against its government.<sup>46</sup> America's unofficial offer of assistance to Brazil's military and approval of its actions best represented in the minds of many Brazilians the hard power 'reward' Brazil received from the U.S. for years of Brazilian support during one of the United States' most trying periods in its history.

### **C. BRAZIL: 1965 TO 1991**

The second period to be addressed started with President Johnson becoming increasingly bogged down and distracted with Vietnam. Vietnam became such a disaster for the Johnson administration that the president eventually announced in 1968 that he would not run for re-election.

Concerning Brazil, President Johnson's handling of the Alliance for Progress program reduced the progress and its execution down to a crawl. Between the in-house fighting in the Johnson administration and the president's requirement that all loans above \$10 million required his direct approval, the program became counter productive. It had become so absurd in the implementation and interpretation of the rules that Brazil actually cancelled loans from the U.S. for badly needed fertilizer shortly before Brazil's growing season.<sup>47</sup>

In April 1967, President Johnson called for a meeting of American chiefs of state. His staff had finally impressed upon him the importance of Latin America and how the American president needed to at least acknowledge the region. At this meeting in Punta del Este, President Johnson committed the U.S. through the Inter-American Development

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<sup>46</sup> Lowenthal, A. F., ed. (1991). Exporting Democracy: The United States and Latin America, Themes and Issues. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 199.

<sup>47</sup> Levinson, J. and De Onis, J. (1972). The Alliance That Lost Its Way: A Critical Report on the Alliance for Progress. Chicago: A Twentieth Century Fund Study by Quadrangle Books, 117-119.

Bank and the Export-Import Bank. Johnson also pledged strong support of the U.S. for a Latin American common market. Despite Johnson's hope for quick and successful market integration, Brazil dragged its feet on the proposal. Brazil's concern, as well as that of several other Latin America countries, was that the development of a common market left Latin America too vulnerable to U.S. corporations to come in and quickly dominate.<sup>48</sup>

After the politically debilitating war in Vietnam forced President Johnson to refuse a re-election bid, a new era in U.S.–Brazilian relations was introduced. The new era was ushered in under President Richard M. Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's tutelage. President Nixon was a realist who believed that working toward an 'ideal' Latin American policy was unrealistic and a waste of time and resources.

What Nixon and his administration wanted was very similar to what the Johnson administration had privately worked toward (though Nixon and Kissinger were more vocal and upfront); predictability and stability. The predictability the U.S. wanted was one where the government, regardless of type, would support U.S. policy in the region. The stability sought, meant that any government in place that supported U.S. policies would remain in place until its services were no longer needed. At that point in the relationship, the U.S. would make the determination whether or not it wanted to continue its support through economic and military assistance or discontinue its relationship based on U.S. two-level game domestic politics. In the case of Brazil, stability meant that the U.S. could count on the military leadership of Brazil for continued support of U.S. policies and how they chose to handle internal strife was up to them.<sup>49</sup> The United States would maintain its over-arching policy of preferring economic stability over democratic consistency.

Under President Carter, the United States' rules changed and human rights became the primary focus. Interestingly enough, while the rules in Brazil did change, hard power coercion remained the U.S tactic in the region though the approach shifted dramatically. Under Johnson, military and economic aid was used to buy continued

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<sup>48</sup> Levinson and De Onis, pp 173-174.

<sup>49</sup> Lowenthal, pp 195.

support of Brazilian military leaders. Under the Carter administration, the threat to withhold military and economic aid had the effect of alienating Brazil's military leaders. In defiance to the Carter administration 'meddling' in Brazil's human rights affairs, then-President Ernesto Geisel cancelled a 25 year standing military aid program from the U.S.<sup>50</sup> Despite President Carter's persistent efforts, initially very little success in mitigating human right abuses seemed to take place in Brazil. The United States' relation with the military dictatorship continued to deteriorate during the remainder of President Carter's term in office. President Carter's focus on human rights did however publicize a glaring deficiency in the political practice of Brazilian's military rulers. This negative publicity eventually encouraged and presumably hastened the return to a civilian democratic government.<sup>51</sup>

A definitive philosophy shift occurred again during the Reagan administration. This shift in U.S. policy philosophy was best defined by President Reagan's foreign policy advisor during his 1980 campaign and his Ambassador to the United Nations after election, Jean Jordan Kirkpatrick. Ambassador Kirkpatrick brought to the Reagan administration a theory whereby she blamed the Carter administration for many of the failures in Latin America. She stated that it was President Carter's unwillingness to support dictators friendly to the U.S. that created such failures in his foreign relations efforts. Ambassador Kirkpatrick's belief was the United States should support U.S.-friendly authoritarian governments regardless of their human rights records. The United States should only oppose those regimes that demonstrated such a gross or nefarious tendency as to be put in the same category of totalitarians as Germany's Hitler or Russian's Stalin.<sup>52</sup> This new political philosophy during the Reagan administration helped resolve many of the bitter feelings between the Brazilian military government and Washington. The blatant return to the use and support of hard power by the Reagan administration, particularly during his first term in office, arguably extended the rule of the harsh Brazilian dictatorship. The U.S. support of dictatorships only increased the hardship of the local people and thereby further solidified a generation's view of anti-

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., pp 208.

<sup>51</sup> Carothers, T. (1999). Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 28.

<sup>52</sup> Gilderhus, pp 217-218.

Americanism. Not surprisingly, the majority of Brazilian's became confused and bewildered at the United States' tendency to flip-flop on policies from one administration to the next.

Throughout President Reagan's presidency in the 1980s, his focus did subtly shift to a more pro-democracy agenda rather than one of strictly anti-communism. President Reagan initiated "Project Democracy" and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). Project Democracy's principal objective was to counter the enormous amount of funds that the Soviet Union was applying toward pro-Marxism and Leninism propaganda through the increased use of the Soviet's soft power capability. The White House began in earnest in the early 1980s to again consider world-wide conferences and plans to spread the 'gospel' and the virtues of democracy.<sup>53</sup> The initial purpose of NED was to provide a direct and complimentary role to spread the positive virtues of democracy over that of Leninism. A close second, though not a primary role, was to assist in the direct development of democracy abroad. In the final stages of Congressional funding approval, NED became the only program awarded funds due to the more bipartisan approach and perceived independent infrastructure of the program.<sup>54</sup> So, while NED is funded by the U.S. State Department, it is more autonomous of political influence than most people realize.

#### **D. BRAZIL: 1992 TO 2004**

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, The United States' foreign policy focus drastically shifted. Brazil was well on its way to consolidating the democracy that it had reestablished only seven years earlier. The United States was able to shift its focus from targeting anti-communist organizations to goals more closely focusing on pro-democracy, if only so slightly.

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<sup>53</sup> Carothers, pp 30-31.

<sup>54</sup> NED was officially inaugurated by President Reagan in December 1983 with a budget of \$18 million. It is still in operation today with an annual operating budget of approximately \$30 million. Its management and Board of Directors are independent from government bias, though is still funded by the U.S. government. Interestingly enough, the largest recipient of NED's funds is the AFL-CIO whose primary predilection was anticommunist in the 1980s. This was a very large part of its thrust, specifically in Brazil with its large labor movement. Another main function of NED is the distribution of funds. The majority of the funds are distributed to: The International Republican Institute (IRI), the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), and the American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS). These organizations are uniquely qualified to provide technical assistance to aspiring democracies worldwide.

One of the methods that the United States demonstrated a pro-democracy focus in civil society was through the use of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The new focus on NGOs demonstrated a subtle shift in the use of soft power. NGOs during the early nineties were viewed as being one of two distinct types. The two distinct types were *developmental* or *democracy-orientated* in nature. Recently though, the two previously specific types have begun to merge.

The United States government has become much more effective in the use and utilization of NGO's in furthering aid programs. A primary goal of using NGOs is to concentrate at a much lower level of assistance geared toward reaching the people more directly. If necessary, NGO's have even been used for the primary purpose of attempting to all avoid all together the political bureaucracy that has hampered so many aid programs in Latin American countries in the past. NGO's have been used for a variety of things from food distribution to voter monitoring with varying degrees of success.<sup>55</sup> The U.S. government has also used NGO's in monitoring and applying pressure to local government officials on subjects such as human rights, political transparency, judicial reform, and media openness.<sup>56</sup>

As the U.S. government's focus shifted toward civil society development, its deep involvement in NGOs has began to cause an overlapping of duties within many of these same NGOs. The U.S.-NGO cooperation while seeming more sensible and effective did also create some unexpected hardships for certain NGOs. The perception began to form that NGO's started becoming merely tools of the U.S. government, thereby loosing some of their 'independent' status in the eyes of the Brazilian government and just as importantly, a lot of the locals they were intended to assist. <sup>57</sup>

Another factor greatly influencing the relationship between Brazil and the United States during this same time period has been trade. Trade in general and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) agreement specifically, has been a particularly large factor in the relationship between these two large nations as of late. As co-chairmen for the FTAA negotiations until its scheduled completion in January 2005, Brazil and the United

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<sup>55</sup> Carothers, pp 216.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., pp 217.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., pp 214-215.

States have been on diametrically opposed views on most of the measures put before the different negotiating groups. While both sides want increased trade and more open markets, the compromises have been slow in coming. Brazil has accused the United States of increasing subsidies to its own farmers against the spirit of the FTAA (to the tune of tens of billions of dollars annually). In the subcommittees of 'Market Access', 'Agriculture', and 'Subsidies, Antidumping and Countervailing Duties', Brazil has actually filed formal complaints against the United States in the WTO to attempt to force the U.S. to discontinue practices that Brazil sees as illegal. In the specific subcommittees of 'Intellectual Property Rights', 'Government Procurement', and "Services", the U.S. has accused Brazil of being too protective of its industries by maintaining relatively high tariffs and woefully lacking in its policing of intellectual property rights violations.

The use of hard power on the part of the U.S. has had the negative consequence of influencing Brazil into bringing an unexpected participant into the FTAA negotiations. The unexpected and peripheral influencer into the negotiating mix has been the European Union (EU)<sup>58</sup>. As Brazil has effectively demonstrated in the past, it has brought in another player in which to pit the United States against in order to gain a more favorable economic and trade agreement. Brazil and the EU have been in separate but parallel negotiations on trade pacts that could adversely affect the U.S. Realistically though, the EU's primary interest in Latin America is merely an attempt to hedge its bets. The EU does not want to see a too-powerful free trade area in the Western hemisphere which would adversely affect its struggling trade, in relation to the United States'.

In a report by the United States Trade Representative's (USTR) office, the U.S. just finalized a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Central America.<sup>59</sup> Along with agreements with the Andean countries<sup>60</sup>, the USTR has announced FTA discussions with Uruguay, the Dominican Republic, and Panama - all these within the last several

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<sup>58</sup> For the purpose of this thesis, the EU will be considered synonymous with the European Community (EC) and the European Economic Community (EEC). The creation of the EEC was primarily to create a common market to increase economic integration and prosperity among member states.

<sup>59</sup> USTR Press Release (2003, December 17). *U.S. & Central American Countries Conclude Historic Free Trade Agreement*. Retrieved from [www.ustr.org](http://www.ustr.org), last accessed December 14, 2004.

<sup>60</sup> Andean Regional countries consist of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia.

months.<sup>61</sup> The only logical way Brazil can view these developments is as a flanking maneuver against any future economical inroads to the highly desired and lucrative markets of the U.S. economy. The United States is again demonstrating its propensity for using hard power for short term concessions over the possibility of long-term beneficial agreements through the use of soft power. The United States is not realistically considering the possibility of a backlash to its hard power tactics toward Brazil where in fact it is a real possibility.

## **E. BRAZIL HISTORIC ANALYSIS**

The initial period of study (1930s to 1964) can be generally characterized as the United States consolidating support from Brazil through the predominant use of soft power. The United States and its increasing involvement in WWII allowed Brazil to enjoy a favorable position in reference to negotiations with the U.S. The United States used a combination of economic assistance, diplomatic overtures, military assistance, opening trade markets, and cultural propaganda to influence Brazilians into a 'better' understanding and acceptance of American views.

The effectiveness of each of the individual methods can be debated. What is not debatable is the fact that the United States used many different methods. The diversity and intensity of some of the methods demonstrated just how important the U.S. felt Brazil was during this period in America's history. Despite the overtly coercive tactics available to the U.S., it appeared to chose a more subtle, cooperative, and cooptive option before and during WWII. The strong support made available to the U.S by Brazil is a demonstration of the effectiveness in cementing the relationship the U.S. achieved with one of the largest nations in the hemisphere.

As the United States has been accused on multiple occasions in the past, immediately after the threat of the war in Europe dissipated, so too did the United States' interest in the utilization of soft power. Under President Truman, Eisenhower, and even Kennedy's administrations, Brazil was faced with a very new and unexpected reality. No one in Brazil appreciated the less respectful manner in which they felt they were being

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<sup>61</sup> Zoellick, R. B. (2003, November 18). *USTR Notifies Congress of Intent to Initiate Free Trade Talks with Andean Countries*. USTR Press Release. Retrieved from [www.ustr.gov](http://www.ustr.gov), last accessed December 2, 2004.

treated by the United States after their immediate services were no longer required at war's end. The United States no longer "needed" Brazil and therefore Brazil's concerns were no longer a U.S. concern or priority. One of the most painful realities for Brazil was the manner in which its request for a permanent seat on the Security Council was summarily ignored by the U.S. immediately following WWII. This fact is still a serious issue in U.S.-Brazil relations over half a century later.

Under the Kennedy administration, Brazil was faced with very schizophrenic policies and an odd and confusing use of both hard power and soft power. President Kennedy instituted the Alliance for Progress initiative, promising tens of billions of dollars to Latin America for its economic, social, and industrial development. Simultaneously, Kennedy also increased the use of the CIA and its less-than-scrupulous tactics in an attempt to influence Brazilian politics. Despite the use of the CIA though, President Kennedy did agree to an emergency loan to Brazil demonstrating a willingness to work in the open and for the sincere improvement of Brazil-U.S. relations. The request for the loan came directly from Brazilian President Goulart during a visit by him to the White House in 1962. The explicit purpose of the loan was to fight communism in the Brazilian Northeast by improving the living standards as per the Alliance for Progress tenants.<sup>62</sup> By the end of 1963, it seemed clear that Goulart was not able to implement the reforms he stated and the loan was recalled. The U.S. intention to use soft power influence over a terse relationship had gone from bad to worse.

When Brazil's president began instituting land reforms to help with the wealth inequality, the United States took this as an indication of socialism and further evidence of communist influence in the country. In the view of the United States at the time, where there was socialism, communism was not far behind and was in the logical progression of things. For this reason, along with the failed implementation of the Alliance for Progress in Brazil, the United States immediately began cutting economic aid. Between the disruption of economic aid and the subtle encouragement to the military, a military coup became all but inevitable. The fact that the United States immediately reinstituting economic aid after the coup only further confirmed the U.S. as

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<sup>62</sup> Roett, pp 169-170.



a strong supporter of the overthrow of a democratically elected government.<sup>63</sup> At the end of this first period of study, while the United States predominantly practiced soft power and had very good relations with Brazil, the United States' tactics became inconsistent, ineffective, and even counterproductive. In the end, the United States received from Brazil excellent support for WWII. In return, Brazil received from the United States, a military coup.

The second period (1964 to 1991) proved to be unfortunately no better in reference to the consistency or effectiveness of U.S. foreign policy than the first period. The first 10 years of this second phase (under Presidents Johnson and Nixon) proved difficult for Latin America. President Johnson was not interested in getting too involved with Latin America and established the informal policy to accept Latin American governments "as is".<sup>64</sup> Under President Nixon and his administration's hard power heavy use of the CIA, stability and consistency in the region again became the driving force of foreign policy. A perfect and sad example of this is the Nixon's administration involvement in Chile and the rise to power of General Pinochet. Thirty years after he came to power, political and human right issues are still surfacing affecting the country deeply and continuously producing repercussions stalling the economic development of a resource rich country. The tactics and form of hard power was not nearly as important as the results the current governmental administration hoped they would provide. It was during the Nixon administration where the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funds reached its lowest point of contributions to Latin America in the forty year period between the 1950s and 1990s.<sup>65</sup> Conversely, hard power through military aid to Brazil continued to increase and peaked during the Nixon administration without regard to democratic ideals or human suffering.<sup>66</sup> This in and of itself demonstrated a lack of concern for economic expansion, democratic development,

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<sup>63</sup> Lowenthal, pp 199-200.

<sup>64</sup> Gilderhus, pp 194.

<sup>65</sup> U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) (1996). USAID Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean. *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants*.

<sup>66</sup> Mott, W. H. (2002). *United States Military Assistance: An Empirical Perspective*. Greenwood Press, 107.

or the application of any soft power. During this period, hard power was by far the definitive rule rather than the exception.

Despite Carter's emphasis on human rights, it must be emphasized that his approach must also be classified as hard power. The rationale behind the hard power classification is that despite Carter's intentions, his approach was not to co-opt anyone or any government. His specific intent was to coerce authoritarian governments into improving their human rights records or be cut-off from any and all future American aid. This hard power strategy failed in short-term results when the Brazilian government decided to discontinue accepting certain military aid before the Carter administration had time to give the regime any formal ultimatum. The Brazilian government apparently had had enough of America's schizophrenic policies and chose to terminate rather than be terminated. Interestingly enough, President Carter's plan to influence the elite while unsuccessful, did have the unexpected result of endearing the poor and oppressed middle-class into admiring the U.S. and its views on human rights. The approach by the Carter administration produced soft power results by co-opting the majority of oppressed in Brazil – producing support a generation later when those oppressed came to power after the dictatorship rule ended.

Not since President Harry S. Truman had Latin America been able to experience the consistency of a full two-term President as they did under President Reagan. But again, if there is nothing else that the United States is consistent on concerning foreign policy, it is its unvarying inconsistency. President Reagan vowed to defeat communism and bring strength to the United States. It was common knowledge that Ambassador Kirkpatrick believed that it was in the United States' best interest to support Brazil's authoritarian regimes as long as they did not 'deteriorate' into a totalitarian regime. With a firm belief in hard power, the U.S. under Reagan increased USAID funding for Latin America from a low of \$638 million at the beginning of the Carter administration to a peak of \$2.3 billion just after the beginning of President Reagan's first term.<sup>67</sup> Interestingly enough, funding for Brazil did not substantially increase from the lows suffered during the Carter administration's cuts. However, while the Reagan

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<sup>67</sup> USAID.

administration did not significantly increase funding for Brazil, neither did it attempt to highlight its human rights abuses and violations. The mix of hard power and soft power application in Brazil was a result more from domestic politicking than from any cohesive or comprehensive strategic plan to help ensure the flourishing of democracy. Having the “Third Wave of Democracy”<sup>68</sup> sweep through Latin America during the Reagan administration and the Soviet Union collapsing just after Reagan left office in 1988 provided an indelible legacy for the Reagan administration. Unfortunately, those two experiences had more to do with coincidence than with any great American policy strategy that the Reagan administration had instituted.

The final phase being analyzed in this chapter (**1992 to 2004**) is simplified for two reasons. The first reason is due to the relatively short time period. The second reason is based on the fact that most of this stage occurred during the two-term presidency of Clinton. The end of the Cold War brought a dramatic shift of focus in foreign policy. The United States could now more effectively get away from its previous hard power tactics of attempting to maintain stability by staving off the invasion of communism throughout the region. The U.S. administration could now concentrate on its soft power capabilities to influence through cooption rather than coercion.

The Clinton administration did begin increasing aid in many different areas. The only region to receive more USAID funds for the purpose of promoting democracy than Latin America during Clinton’s presidency was Eastern Europe and Russia.<sup>69</sup> Maximizing the potential soft power influence that the United States could have after the collapse of the Soviet Union, proved to be too tempting a target.<sup>70</sup> Additionally, it was civil society vice the executive or judicial branches of governments that became the direct targets for the funds in both regions of the world.

President Clinton seemed to grasp the importance of sincerity in reference to the dilemmas being faced by Latin Americans, and specifically Brazilians. His attempts at implementing soft power in Latin America are commendable – the results though,

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<sup>68</sup> This is in reference to Samuel P. Huntington’s theory of the Third Wave of Democracy which started in Portugal in 1974 and ended with the fall of the USSR in 1991.

<sup>69</sup> Carothers, pp 51.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., pp 52.

debatable. President Clinton hosted a “Summit of the Americas” in Miami in 1994 representing the first such gathering in almost 30 years.<sup>71</sup> He officially apologized for the role the United States played in Guatemala in the 1950s, admitting guilt and promising to ensure that the same mistake would never be repeated.<sup>72</sup> President Clinton also pushed for a western hemisphere free trade area to help increase economic prosperity for all of Latin America.

The Clinton administration appeared to go out of its way to portray the United States as a caring and compassionate nation. President Clinton wanted to demonstrate the United States as the gleaming example of the positive virtues of decency and democracy. Based on the efforts by the Clinton administration, one would expect that democracy and the United States would have been viewed in a more favorable light and that the advantages of democracy and the example that the U.S. established as a nation would be elevated. Interestingly enough, in a Latinobarometro poll, the number of Brazilians who felt that democracy was a favorable form of government compared to any other form of government actually dropped from 50 % to 30 % from the middle of the Clinton administration to the end.<sup>73 74</sup> While it would be unfair to say this was due to President Clinton and not at least in part on some of the economic hardships being experienced in Brazil at the time, the decline began immediately after Congress denied the President’s bid for fast-track authorization. This denial all but sank any chance Latin America had in believing the United States’ sincerity about opening its markets to free trade with Latin America. The belief that the United States’ main interest remained its own economy, continued to be Latin America’s over-riding perception.

After President George W. Bush came into office in 2000, he was able to acquire the crucial fast-track authority. While this demonstrated a new hope for progress on the faltering FTAA negotiations, it has not a guarantee of completion. Negotiations

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<sup>71</sup> Tulchin, J. S. and Espach, R. H., ed. (2001). Latin America in the International System. London: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 44.

<sup>72</sup> Smith, P.H. (2000). Talons of the Eagle: Dynamics of U.S. – Latin America Relations. Oxford University Press, 139.

<sup>73</sup> *An Alarm Call for Latin America’s Democrats* (2001, July 26). The Latinobarometro. Retrieved from [www.economist.com](http://www.economist.com), last accessed December 8, 2004.

<sup>74</sup> Updated data is available and presented in the conclusion, Chapter IV of this thesis. The latest data available is from 2003.

progressed under the new president's fast-track authorization from the U.S Congress. In the wake of multiple FTAA subcommittee and negotiating group impasses, the Bush administration began using its fast-track authority to approve a litany of agreements with Latin America countries involved with Brazil and Venezuela. The impression being that the U.S. was implementing hard power to force Brazil to acquiesce. History has shown that this does not work well with Brazil.

Early in the Bush administration was the tragic event of "9/11".<sup>75</sup> Despite the difficulties between Brazil and the U.S., it was Brazil that initiated the OAS agreement in collectively condemning the attacks. Brazil also ensured the U.S. of Brazil's commitment to the Rio pact in that an attack on one of the members of OAS constituted an attack on all the members. Brazil's demonstration of solidarity during an extremely difficult period in U.S. history demonstrated its willingness to put disagreements aside, albeit temporarily. Brazil also demonstrated its show of support for others in the larger scheme and the best example of global politics, unity, and character.

The author is not suggesting that the U.S. acquiesce on all points of incongruity being debated in the FTAA subcommittees. History has demonstrated that Brazil's cooperation can not be assumed or taken for granted either. The United States needs to consider acquiescing on small but salient aspects of the FTAA negotiations with President Lula da Silva. This would provide President Lula the ability to open the win-set available to him in the political two-level game among himself, the Brazilian government, and the Brazilian populous.

Of course, 9/11 imposes additional difficulty in trade negotiations. With security instantaneously becoming of paramount importance to the U.S., negotiations have become marred in side issues dealing with the U.S. attempting to increase its security. One perfect example is the new requirement for photographs and finger printing of all Brazilians entering the United States. With 'reciprocity' being a very large factor in U.S.-Brazil relations, Brazil shortly thereafter instituted the same policy for Americans

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<sup>75</sup> The term "9/11" from here on out will refer to the simultaneous terrorist's attacks against the World Trade centers, the Pentagon, and the downing of a fourth airliner in Pennsylvania September 11, 2001.

entering Brazil.<sup>76</sup> While there are valid points on both sides, the purpose for illuminating this less than sanguine point is to highlight the tangential factors that have affected negotiations between two of the largest, both physically and economically, countries in the hemisphere.

A demonstration of soft power on the part of the United States would provide two benefits. The first benefit would provide increased odds of reaching a more equitable FTAA arrangement prior to the deadline of December 2005. The second benefit would to aid the domestic political standing of a Brazilian president that has demonstrated good faith toward the international community, the IMF, World Bank, and the United States.

There are other ill-consequences of the United States' insistence on the hard power approach to trade negotiations with Brazil. One would be the strengthening of Mercosur. Brazil has consistently insisted that Mercosur negotiate as a block vice as individual countries. The intent is to provide more strength in negotiations against such a huge economic might as the single country of the U.S. A second alternative would be a Latin America Free Trade Agreement (LAFTA). With Venezuela squarely opposed to any increase of the U.S. hegemonic power in the region, it would seriously consider multitude concessions to convince Brazil that it should look inward prior to considering any outward agreement with the United States.

It is important to note some of the shortcomings of the previously mentioned options. While a negotiation with the EU is a good strategic approach for Brazil to undertake, its end goal is not realistic. Due to the fact that the EU's tariffs tend to be higher than the United States', consideration of the EU dropping its tariffs to allow greater access for Brazil is not realistic in the short term. Additionally, despite Brazil's disgust with the U.S. and its high subsidies, France has even higher subsidies for its farmers than even the U.S. Again, expecting France to decrease its government subsidies for the sake of Brazil is not realistic. LAFTA has one primary shortcoming. Agreements among all Latin American countries in and of itself would prove nearly impossible at best. Latin America's economic diversity is too lacking to allow for sustained increased

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<sup>76</sup> MSNBC News (2004, January 5). *U.S. Begins Fingerprinting Most Visitors: Brazil Counters by Doing Same To Americans Visiting Its Country*. Terrorism and Security section. Retrieved from <http://reprints.msnbc.com/id/3875747/>, last accessed December 1, 2004.

trade primarily in and amongst themselves, and therefore is not economically feasible at this time.

The one option that should frighten the U.S. is China. China's economic development is absorbing as many resources as its economy can handle. These not only include Brazil's natural resources and steal technology, but Venezuela's petroleum products. Having a population base nearly four times that of the United States', China is a point of consideration and concern.

President Lula's economic policies have demonstrated incredible discipline. His administration has also demonstrated to the international community Brazil's good faith in repaying billions of dollars in loans. Brazil's support of the UN and the U.S. by taking the lead in the Peacekeeping force in Haiti should also be commended. The United States has more to gain both regionally and internationally by having a strong Brazilian president as an ally instead of an adversary. The best way to ensure President Lula's ability to continue leading his nation toward a stronger and more consolidated democracy is through support of economic development. The U.S. could ensure that progress by reciprocating the good will that Brazil has extended and allow President Lula the opportunity to bring home some victories through soft power endorsements by the United States.

### **III. VENEZUELA**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Over the past 70 years, the United States has employed very specific and intentional policies and programs toward Brazilian issues and concerns. The seemingly cavalier attitude taken toward Venezuela by contrast during this same period, directly contradicts the painstaking care taken by the U.S. in cultivating its relationship with Brazil. Whether the contrasting policies have been due to Brazil's size, its natural resources<sup>77</sup>, or based on Brazilian troop support of the Allied Powers during WWII, is beyond the purview of this thesis. While comparisons in foreign policies may be made between Brazil and Venezuela, the intent of this thesis chapter is not to analyze contradictory diplomatic approaches, but to analyze the approach the U.S. has taken toward Venezuela as an individual country.

Venezuela is an important nation to the United States, both for historic and current commonalities. Its fight for independence has many parallels with that of the United States' and its relevance concerning current issues are also undeniable. Venezuela plays an essential role in U.S. foreign policy on such central issues as the war on drugs, war on terrorism, being a major U.S. oil supplier, the FTAA, and especially on its current relations with Cuba.

The following chapter highlights three main areas of U.S.-Venezuelan relations and the hard power / soft power interactions and politics between the two. The first area is the United States and Venezuela's political history and America's propensity for using hard power with Venezuela throughout that history. The second focus is on the last six years during and since the first election of Hugo Chavez Frias as Venezuela's democratically elected president. The chapter dedicates its final section to the specific relationship between Venezuela and Cuba.

The chapter research focuses on how the U.S. used hard power / soft power towards Venezuela and its effectiveness in influencing political outcomes. What effect if

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<sup>77</sup> Brazil's natural resources were apparent to the United States upon the country gaining its independence from Portugal. Venezuela's natural resource – oil being its most vital currently, was not discovered until approximately 1914.



any did the U.S. hard power policies have in Venezuela? It shows the relationship between hard power application by the U.S. and the changing attitudes of Venezuelans toward the United States and democracy. These are then compared and contrasted with the soft power approach successfully applied by Cuba in Venezuela.

## **B. U.S.-VENEZUELAN RELATIONS**

### **1. 1800s**

The history of cooperation between Venezuela and the United States dates back to Venezuela's fight for independence in 1811. The United States was not the first country to recognize Venezuela's independence, unlike the case with Brazil. Venezuela none the less has always held a unique historical position in America's foreign policy. Venezuela was the first recipient nation to ever receive an official U.S. foreign aid bill. In May 1812, Venezuela received \$150,000 in disaster relief from the United States in response to a devastating earthquake.<sup>78</sup> Despite the close relationship that these two countries have shared, that relationship has none the less been tested.

Venezuelans have always had a tendency to consider the United States' and Venezuela's history as being parallel. The belief provided an interesting bond between the two relatively distant countries in the early 1800s. Both countries fought for their independence from European colonial powers, wanted a united nation and democratic self-rule. Progressively thinking, both countries also wanted free trade and international recognition at a very early point in their respective independence. Many Venezuelan historians have also drawn the comparison between the United States' General George Washington and Venezuelan's General Simon Bolivar. Both generals are considered great leaders, politically and militarily, and are credited for leading the charge for their respective country's independence.<sup>79</sup>

Despite the similar origins and battles for independence, the United States' and Venezuela's later development diverged dramatically. In the early 1800s while Venezuelans were fighting Spain for their independence, the United States was enjoying

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<sup>78</sup> Schraeder, P.J. (1992). Intervention Into the 1990s: U.S. Foreign Policy in the Third World. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 75.

<sup>79</sup> Ewell, J. (1996). Venezuela and the United States: From Monroe's Hemisphere to Petroleum's Empire. Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 67-68.

an ongoing trade relationship with Venezuela's colonial master, Spain. Partly based on the trade relationship, the United States was compelled to ignore Venezuelan patriots' early cries for assistance in their fight. Despite Venezuela declaring its independence in 1811, the U.S. maintained its political neutrality during Venezuela's ten year struggle for its independence from its former colonial power.<sup>80</sup> It is a question worth asking as to whether the fledgling U.S. could have actually done much to effectively assist Venezuelans in garnering its independence from Spain. That the United States chose to do nothing to assist Venezuela however, spoke volumes as to its probable future policy inclinations.

In 1895 Venezuela again asked for U.S. assistance. Venezuela was embroiled in a border dispute with the English colony of British Guyana<sup>81</sup>. When England attempted to "annex" land for British Guyana from Venezuela, the United States stepped in. The U.S. justification for its involvement in the matter was the Monroe Doctrine.

It was 72 years earlier in 1823 during the initial introduction and implementation of the Monroe Doctrine where most Venezuelan elites gained their understanding of the doctrine. The Venezuelan elites were surprisingly supportive of the U.S. policy. The mentality of Venezuelans toward the Monroe Doctrine at the time was based on the feeling of shared history and general geographical proximity - particularly in relation to the worrisome European powers. Venezuela believed at the time that having a strong "ally" willing to intervene on its behalf would prove very beneficial.<sup>8283</sup>

England eventually capitulated to the U.S. concerning the border dispute with Venezuela and its demand for arbitration. By agreeing to U.S. led arbitration between Venezuela and themselves, England unofficially acknowledged America's preeminent hegemonic influence in the hemisphere. The episode was important in that America was willing to support Venezuela at this point, though predominantly for self-serving reasons.

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<sup>80</sup> Kelly, J. and Romero, C. (2002). The United States and Venezuela: Rethinking a Relationship. New York: Routledge, 6-7.

<sup>81</sup> Based on multiple texts, the spelling for this country vacillates between 'Guyana' and 'Guiana'.

<sup>82</sup> Hollinger, D. (1998, Spring). Review of "Venezuela and the United States: From Monroe's Hemisphere to Petroleum's Empire." *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, 40, 1, 129.

<sup>83</sup> Shoultz, L. (1998). Beneath the United States: A History of U.S. Policy Toward Latin America. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 108.

In a broader political scope than just U.S. intervention, was that by acquiescing to U.S. demands, Great Britain unofficially acknowledged the Monroe Doctrine.<sup>84</sup>

Concerning this particular call by Venezuela for assistance from the United States, two points become significant. The first point is that it took the United States nearly 25 years of Venezuela's constant letters and diplomatic pleas before it actually became officially involved in the border dispute with Great Britain. When the United States eventually did involve itself, it was primarily due to the long-term significant ramifications on U.S. relations that this particular incident would have with other European nations.

The second point concerns the actual outcome of arbitration between interested parties. When the United States subsequently agreed to help Venezuela by forcing Great Britain to an arbitration panel, Venezuela was actually excluded from all negotiations. Through the use of hard power tactics by the United States and concessions primarily on the part of Venezuela, the Venezuelan administration was eventually 'allowed' to recommend the United States' Supreme Court Justice as its representative to the arbitration. In the end, England was awarded nearly everything it asked for except the Orinoco River delta in the very north-east corner of what is now Venezuela.<sup>85</sup> The United States again demonstrated its priorities to Venezuela through the use of hard power. The point of this example is not meant as a judgment call against the U.S.; it merely exemplifies historical fact, foreign policy methodology, and political necessity by the U.S. at the time of the event.

## **2. Oil and the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

U.S - Venezuelan relations did not begin the 20<sup>th</sup> century under much better circumstances than the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The early 1900s found Venezuela embroiled in failed negotiations with almost ten different European countries claiming monies due from unpaid customs receipts (the primary means of government revenue during this time period). In an attempt to force Venezuela to repay its debts, Germany,

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<sup>84</sup> Schoultz, pp 120-122.

<sup>85</sup> Shoultz, pp 126.

Italy, and Great Britain instituted a naval blockade of the country's most vital trade ports to force repayment of all Venezuela's debts.

The United States intervened at the behest of the Venezuelan government once again. This time, the U.S. compelled the European powers to discontinue the blockade.<sup>86</sup> During this incident, the United States arguably sided with Venezuela concerning the disputed debts. The U.S. was able to convince many European countries to drop a large percentage of its claims and allegations against Venezuela and agree to only a portion of reparations originally demanded. The U.S. was able to reorganize Venezuelan debts to the general satisfaction of most of the litigating nations. However, through hard power coercion, the U.S. had Venezuela agree to repay nearly 100 % of monies due to the more important powers in Europe: Germany, Italy, and Great Britain. Part of the reasoning was that the U.S. felt that these three countries bore the brunt of the cost in pushing for repayment and should be compensated. Despite siding with Venezuela on the majority of the debt deliberations, the U.S. ensured that at least the European powers were taken care of. Venezuela was starting to realize the potential folly of the type of relationship it was allowing itself to form with the United States. The concern over the relationship was best stated by Venezuela's then-president Cipriano Castro when he declared that he feared Venezuela was merely trading one oppressive power for another.<sup>87</sup> This episode not only marked the United States' undisputed hegemony in the hemisphere, but also its dominance over Venezuela. Up to this point, Venezuela truly believed it was worthy of being considered America's equal.

In 1914, there was a degree of mending to the strained relationship between Venezuela and the United States. What allowed Venezuela to regain some face-saving and special-relation status with the hegemon to the North was the country's discovery of

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<sup>86</sup> Kelly and Romero, pp 9.

<sup>87</sup> It was out of this episode of which the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine was born. It basically stated that if nations of the Western Hemisphere could not 'behave' in a civilized manner, then it would be the responsibility of the United States (NOT European powers) to ensure behavior was maintained, debts paid, and order returned to the hemisphere.

huge oil deposits.<sup>88</sup> This development in Venezuela's political and economic history helped set it apart from the rest of South America.<sup>89</sup>

Venezuela's oil discovery quickly led to United States petroleum companies imbedding themselves in Venezuela. The commercial affiliation began to cause great discontent in U.S.-Venezuelan relations. Increasing dissatisfaction among local Venezuelans was perpetuated by the U.S. oil companies forming American enclaves within Venezuela and intentionally excluding local Venezuelan workers from enjoying the benefits and special duty free imports designed specifically and exclusively for the Americans.<sup>90</sup> The preferential treatment of American workers over local employees and Venezuela's seemingly inability to stop or even control the inequality, only added to the dissatisfaction and the continued rise in anti-Americanism. The unacceptable behavior among some American workers and their blatant disregard for local rules and customs only exasperated the conviction among Venezuelans that the U.S. was less an ally and more an opportunist.<sup>91</sup> The belief was quickly forming that Americans were elitist snobs who felt they were above the law and believed that American interests were more important than the local's interest whose natural resources Americans were exploiting.

In the early 1940s, Venezuela began to experience major political destabilization. In 1945 and 1948 the destabilization led to government administrations being overthrown by *golpes*<sup>92</sup>. The 1948 overthrow of the democratically elected leader did lead to debate in Washington D.C. The deliberation was as to whether the U.S. should acknowledge the new military government or not. The U.S. ambassador to Venezuela at the time cabled President Truman and stated, "While I deplore the overthrow of constitutional governments by force, I am of the opinion that our national interests in Venezuela would

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<sup>88</sup> Kelly and Romero, pp 10.

<sup>89</sup> Other than Venezuela, Mexico was the only other country south of the United States with substantial amounts of oil deposits – Ecuador being a minor exception. Based on the fact that Mexico maintained such a vast common border with the United States, allowed Mexico to have a 'more 'special' place in U.S. foreign policy than even Venezuela.

<sup>90</sup> Ewell, pp 140.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> *Golpe* is a loose term indicating the overthrow of an established government usually, but not exclusively, by the military of that country in which it occurs.

be best served by recognizing the Junta.”<sup>93</sup> This mentality only led to further fuel the belief that the U.S. was more interested in oil than democracy. In January 1949, the U.S. formally recognized the military junta as the legal government of Venezuela, thereby ensuring continuity in its oil and economic transactions.

In neither the 1945 nor the 1948 overthrow is there concrete evidence of the U.S. being directly involved. If the U.S. was not directly involved though, it was at least informed of the impending overthrows. These governmental overthrows and the United States’ lack of willingness to intervene do not demonstrate hard power. What the inaction of the U.S. does demonstrate is a lack of concern over the extension of democracy. It also demonstrates to Venezuelans, a U.S. foreign policy propensity to prioritize economics over democracy. United States cultural soft power influence continued to decrease as anti-Americanism continued to rise.

What should not be overlooked by historians in either country is the cultural or soft power influence the United States was having on Venezuela’s middle and upper class. While the majority of Venezuelans who could afford ‘things American’ were strong supporters of the U.S. and its soft power influence of opulence and culture, there were those that were concerned. To the dismay of some Venezuelans, “The use of such a formidable weapon [as film] can inculcate a new ideology, a new system of customs, values, and ways of thinking in [Venezuelan] society.”<sup>94</sup> By 1949, Nelson Rockefeller had opened the first supermarket in Venezuela and by 1953 there were six Sears, Roebuck and Company outlets.<sup>95</sup> The high demand for U.S. goods, particularly among the Venezuelan middle-class could not be satiated. Demand for all products from the U.S. was so high that, new trade agreements on the importation of U.S. agricultural goods though even forced some Venezuelan farmers out of business. During the 1950’s Venezuela became the third largest importer of American agricultural products in the

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<sup>93</sup> Schwartzberg, S. (1997, October). Romulo Betancourt: From a Communist Anti-Imperialist to a Social Democrat with U.S. Support. *Journal of American Studies*, 29, 3, 638.

<sup>94</sup> Ewell, pp 141.

<sup>95</sup> Ewell, pp 175.

Western Hemisphere.<sup>96</sup> This is mentioned to emphasize the level of influence that American culture and its soft power was having on a foreign society.

Despite some of the negative rhetoric being directed at the U.S., there were many positive effects Americans and American culture had in Venezuela as well. As interaction between Americans and Venezuelans developed, good examples of American integration into Venezuelan society also increased. Some examples of positive soft power *Americana* introduced into the Venezuelan middle-class and the more elite society were things such as little league baseball, the YMCA, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Parent-Teacher Associations, as well as combined U.S.-Venezuelan schools. In the 1950s, 65% of the films shown in Venezuela were American produced and six of the most popular magazines in Venezuela were edited in the U.S.<sup>97</sup> By the end of the 1950s, English replaced French as the second most common language in Venezuela.

Another effect of American soft power and cultural influence was that American universities replaced French educational institutions as a must for the children of the upper middle class and Venezuelan elite.<sup>98</sup> As more Venezuelan elites began educating their children in America, the American ideals began to become deeply imbedded in these children. As these children of the elite began to move into more influential positions, their understanding and appreciation for the United States aided in the increased cooperation between the two countries. By the late 1950s, Venezuela had become one of the United States' biggest supporters. The Venezuelan middle and upper class had embraced and taken ownership of all things American and that influence would last approximately 50 years.

As had occurred so often in the past, the United States' historic tendency of vacillating and remaining unpredictable in its foreign policies did leave some Venezuelans bewildered, disappointed, and bitter. The frustration of the larger segment of poor Venezuelan society developed over a very considerable time span. From America's refusal to aid in Venezuela's fight for independence in 1811 to the U.S.

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<sup>96</sup> Avery. W. P. (1976, Autumn). Oil, Politics, and Economic Policy Making: Venezuela and the Andean Common Market. *International Organization*, 30, 4, 543.

<sup>97</sup> Ewell, pp 187.

<sup>98</sup> Ewell, pp 181-182.

supporting military dictatorships in 1945, 1948, and again in 2002,<sup>99</sup> some Venezuelans did not feel comfortable with having such a powerful nation so close. Despite America's democratic rhetoric during sporadic periods of peace, its hard power actions were tending to speak much louder than the soft power approach to the more affluent minority.

In 1958 Vice-President Richard Nixon took a goodwill tour through multiple Latin American countries. In May of that year, despite warnings from his own security force, Nixon went to Caracas, Venezuela. During a transit between engagements, Vice President Nixon's motorcade came under attack by local protestors.<sup>100</sup> The episode highlighted the continuing rise in anti-Americanism that had been developing in Venezuela since even before the discovery of oil. Adding to the anti-American attitudes was America's possible involvement with the two military coups in the 1940s and the continuous lack of U.S. respect for the culture and laws of the country. The Nixon incident illustrates the decaying relationship between the U.S. and Venezuela after years of a policy more generally referred to as *benign neglect*.<sup>101 102</sup>

In 1958, due to an oil glut on the international market and falling prices, President Eisenhower established a U.S. import quota on almost all foreign oil. Exempted from the stringent quotas were Mexico and Canada. This overt use of economic hard power greatly alienated Venezuela which had always considered itself a political and economic friend to the United States.<sup>103</sup> The demonstration of hard power against a country which considered itself a true ally only confused and angered many of Venezuela's political elite.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Bruce, I. (2004, December 7). U.S. Wrestles with Venezuelan Policy. *BBC News*, Caracas, pp 2. Retrieved from <http://newsvote.bbc.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/407>. Last visited on December 8, 2004.

<sup>100</sup> McPherson, A. (2003). *Yankee No!: Anti-Americanism in U.S. – Latin American Relations*; Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 9 – 11.

<sup>101</sup> Jordan, R. J. (1991). *The Return of the "Good Neighbor": A Policy For Achieving U.S. Objectives in Latin America Through the Nineties and Beyond?* Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, 91-92.

<sup>102</sup> The term benign neglect refers to a United States policy approach. The implication is that for Venezuela (and Latin America in general), as long as internal problems within the specified country do not affect the United States' greater international relationship or adversely affect its domestic policies, then the U.S. is more than willing to allow the local leader(s) to deal with their own problems. The U.S. would simply ignore the situation without malice.

<sup>103</sup> Tugwell, F. (1975). *The Politics of Oil in Venezuela*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 73.

<sup>104</sup> Tugwell, pp 67-72.



Despite many U.S. government policies concerning Venezuelan oil though, American soft power was continuing to influence a lot of Venezuelans. Those being influenced though did not represent the majority of the population. The Venezuelans that remained poor, even after the influx of billions of dollars in petroleum revenues and unable to experience or afford the Cultural Revolution unfortunately represented the majority. It was the poor and ignored segments of Venezuelan society that attacked Vice President Nixon and rioted in the streets against the United States. America's soft power was effective, but the audience – while the elite – were also the minority.

Despite the import quotas put into place by the U.S. in the 1950s, Venezuela continued to demonstrate its allegiance to America. During the Arab-Israeli War in 1973, the Middle-East members of OPEC placed an oil embargo against the United States. Venezuela continued to provide the United States with badly needed oil in direct defiance of the other OPEC countries.<sup>105</sup> While Venezuela's main concern was economic considerations, it none the less chose its relationship with the United States (economic and political) over that of its relations with fellow OPEC members.

One year later in 1974, President Gerald Ford was forced by Congress to pass a Trade Reform Act.<sup>106</sup> The hard power protectionist nature of the trade act penalized all OPEC countries. The Act also unintentionally affected Venezuela and Ecuador as OPEC Charter members. The two countries were not given any special compensation or differentiation by the U.S. despite their continued support of America.<sup>107</sup> Again, the hard power tactics regularly used against a relatively benign country such as Venezuela only further eroded any goodwill that may have existed between Venezuela and the economically oil dependent hegemon to the north.

The continued lack of consideration or special compensation for Venezuela directly led to decreasing support for U.S. foreign policy in the region whether related to oil or not. Any soft power or cultural influence the U.S. may have had with Venezuela had finally been depleted. Policies dealing with the isolationist attitudes of the United

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<sup>105</sup> Kelly and Romero, pp 21.

<sup>106</sup> The 1974 Trade Reform Act, Section 301, authorized the U.S. Trade Representative to implement actions against apparent unfair trade practices via retaliatory trade restrictions. Retrieved from [http://hubcap.clemson.edu/~gjwells/US\\_Policy/sld010.htm](http://hubcap.clemson.edu/~gjwells/US_Policy/sld010.htm). Last accessed November 7, 2004.

States toward Cuba became increasingly ignored by Latin American countries. The United States' heavy hand and incessant use of hard power in the region drove many Latin America countries to actually embrace Cuba. Responding to the United States' Reform Act of 1974, Latin America actually developed its own trade pact, deliberately excluding the United States and intentionally *including* Cuba. The United States' inability to differentiate Venezuela as a serious concern or neighbor, only led to long-term damage, lost support, and detrimental regional policies. The continued hard power foreign policy approach by the U.S. thereby consistently eroded its own long-term influence based on near-sighted and short term goals.

The Falklands/Malvinas War with Argentina in 1982 only exacerbated the anti-American sentiment in both Brazil and Venezuela - not to mention Argentina. The United States' failure to support the Rio Pact<sup>108</sup> only reinforced pre-existing notions of a self-serving United States in the minds of most Latin Americans. The assumption was that despite a treaty signed by the United States, a mutual defense agreement among countries so unequal in relative strength was completely anecdotal.<sup>109</sup> The U.S. also corroborated the existing sentiment in Venezuela that the United States' greatest concern despite the existing treaties with its Latin America 'allies' was that what was best for the United States was the only thing that really mattered. Subsequently, during the Falklands/Malvinas War, any consideration, logic, or credit the United States should have received for its decision to side with Great Britain was given no consideration. This lack of consideration was despite the fact, argued the U.S., that Argentina was a military and oppressive dictatorship and was the uncontested aggressor in the conflict. None of this mattered in comparison to the United States' blatant disregard of the Rio Pact in the hearts and minds of Latin Americans.

Venezuela continued to demonstrate its lack of support for the United States throughout the middle to late 1980s. In 1983, Venezuela helped organize a group of

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<sup>107</sup> Kryzanek, M. J. (1990). U.S. – Latin America Relations. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Praeger, New York: Praeger, 74.

<sup>108</sup> The Rio Pact is a mutually supportive defense initiative signed by all countries in the hemisphere (except for Cuba) guaranteeing the support of all the other countries in the case of an attack upon one of them from an external threat, force, or nation.

<sup>109</sup> Kryzanek, pp 221-222.

South and Central American countries called the Contadora Group.<sup>110</sup> The Contadora Group involved Mexico, Venezuela, Brazil, and Argentina, to name just a few. It was designed to initiate peace processes and help establish stability in the Central American region by emphasizing arms limitations and promoting democracy.<sup>111</sup> It attempted to counter the hard power military policies of the Reagan administration in the region during this period. Despite the Contadora Group's complete inability to counter-balance the military and economic might of the U.S., they none the less attempted to negotiate peace agreements within Central America. The peace brokering processes conducted by the Contadora group ran counter to the intent of U.S. policy in the region at the time.

Interestingly, the Contadora Group actually found supporters in D.C. The group's soft power influence and ideals of peace, humanitarian rights, international law, and democracy agreed with many in the democratically controlled U.S. Congress previously enjoyed by the Carter administration.<sup>112</sup> While the amount of success may have seemed limited, one can only consider the possibility of increased violence if the group had not been there to counter the Reagan administration's hard power policies. The number of treaties was limited due to U.S. interference. It would be safe to say though, that U.S. policy in Central America was also disrupted based on the groups efforts and soft power focus of poverty prevention and attempted economic development. While it has yet to be seen, Venezuela's roots as the Latin American democratic example set by Simon Bolivar nearly 200 years ago, may yet have life in the dream. If Venezuela is the seed of Latin America unity, then the U.S. may unwittingly be playing the role of the *guano*.<sup>113</sup>

Throughout its relationship with Venezuela, the United States continuously demonstrated a propensity to use hard power in its foreign relations. The U.S. also demonstrated a lack of ability or even willingness to understand the intricacies of the Venezuela psyche. The continuous lack of U.S. willingness to appreciate the relationship

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<sup>110</sup> Barletta, M. and Trinkunas, H. (2004). Regime Type and Regional Security in Latin America: Toward a "Balance of Identity" Theory. In T.V. Paul, James J. Wirtz, and Michel Fortmann (eds.), Balance of Power: Theory and Practice in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 356.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid, pp 341.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid. pp 356.

<sup>113</sup> Guano is the common name for bat dung used as a high grade fertilizer due to its high nitrate content.

that Venezuelan's felt they had earned with the U.S., only cemented Venezuela's harsh feeling for its hegemonic neighbor and its cultural influence.

### **3. Hugo Chavez**

In 1998 a former failed coup leader, Lt. Col. Hugo Chavez Frias, was elected president of Venezuela. He ran for election on a platform of populism, anti-corruption and strong nationalism.<sup>114</sup> After being elected as president, he spent a large portion of his time visiting other countries and its leaders. His visits particularly to Iraq and Cuba greatly concerned the United States.

Despite President Chavez' propensity for just narrowly operating within the bare limits of the Venezuelan constitution,<sup>115</sup> the United States has had many grave concerns about this new leader. One concern of the United States' was that President Chavez had no apparent apprehension regarding upsetting Washington. He proved this by his visits to Saddam Hussein and Fidel Castro shortly after being elected.

In April 2002, in a bit of irony, there was a military coup that ousted the former 1992 coup leader for two days. The day after the coup, the United States quickly recognized the new civilian leader put in by the military junta. President Chavez was reinstated as president the next day, foiling the coup attempt. This early acknowledgement of a new president further strained relations between Washington and Caracas. As the self-proclaimed champions of democracy, the United States lost a considerable amount of credibility, influence, and soft power in its lack of support for Venezuelan democracy. Many in Latin America questioned the motivation of the United States in its failure to condemn the removal of a democratically elected president and to so quickly acknowledge the replacement at the hands of leaders of a military coup. If there were any doubts before in President Chavez' mind or in the minds of his supporters, there were none now – the United States was neither friend nor ally of democracy.

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<sup>114</sup> It is important to note that the failed coup Colonel Chavez led was against then-President Perez. One year after the failed coup, President Perez was ousted from office on corruption charges. Three years later, in 1996, former President Perez was found guilty of the embezzlement and corruption charges mentioned by then-Colonel Chavez, and he was imprisoned.

<sup>115</sup> It is worth mentioning that in 1999 President Chavez was given the authority to rewrite the constitution where he subsequently changed the name of Venezuela and provided himself with a broad swath of increased power under the newly written constitution.

In December 2002, President Chavez fired most of the Board of Directors in the Venezuelan national oil company, Petroleos de Venezuela, Sociedad Anonima (PDVSA). These were professionals, generally cosmopolitan in their outlook, supporters of international corporations, and pro-United States. President Chavez considered these individuals collaborators of the 'rancid oligarchy' who undermined state control of the oil industry, and who he felt had developed a special relationship with corrupt international corporations.<sup>116</sup> He then replaced these executives with those considered more loyal to the president as an individual rather than to the Presidential office. These actions by President Chavez and the United States' complete inability to influence him greatly concerned the U.S. on both economic (oil) related grounds and the signal it sent about Chávez's determination to excise any pockets of pro-American sentiment within the Venezuelan state.

After the PDVSA dismissal, there was a prolonged general strike led by workers in the oil sector. The strikes led to a major disruption of oil sales from Venezuela causing severe economic crisis in the country due to declining oil revenues. The strikes and economic downturn caused a severe polarizing effect. There were many in Washington that expected Chavez to crumble under the economic and financial hemorrhaging due to the near complete halt of oil sales. Despite Washington's best predictions, Chavez refused compromises or concessions and eventually outlasted the organizers of the strikes.

#### **4. Cuba-Venezuela Relations**

The difficult historic relationship between Venezuela and Cuba could not be more different than Venezuela's supportive historic relationship with the United States. The encounters and interactions between Venezuela and Cuba while historically few and brief were none the less, tumultuous. This fact only makes the current relationship between these two countries all the more surprising and extraordinary.

Some of the earlier encounters between Venezuela and Cuba began shortly after Venezuela gained its full independence from Spain. From 1870 to 1873, Venezuela

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<sup>116</sup> Mommer, B. (2003). Subversive Oil. In Steve Ellner and Daniel Hellinger (eds.) Venezuelan Politics in the Chavez Ear: Class, Polarization, & Conflict. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 133-145.

directly aided Cuban rebels in an attempt to overthrow the same Spanish regime from which Venezuela fought so hard to garner its independence.<sup>117</sup> It was the eventual subjugation of Spain at the hands of the United States in 1898 interestingly enough that forced Spain to relinquish all rights to the island nation.<sup>118</sup> The support the U.S provided to Cuba for its independence was the very support that the United States had refused to give Venezuela over 50 years earlier. Unlike Venezuela though, the U.S. maintained very strict controls in Cuba and used extreme hard power with impunity through the use of its military and of the Platt Amendment.<sup>119</sup>

The next significant involvement between Venezuela and Cuba occurred approximately 90 years later. In 1964 shortly after the Cuban Missile Crisis, in an ironic twist Cuba began supplying leftist guerrillas in Venezuela with arms. Cuba's intent was to thwart the impending elections threatening to lead Venezuela to a democratic transition. Cuba also wanted to prevent democracy from re-rooting in Venezuela as well as to foment a Cuban style revolution.<sup>120</sup> It appeared as if Cuba was attempting to reassert itself after the embarrassing stand-off of the Cuban Missile Crisis where the USSR abandoned Cuba.

Cuba's hard power assistance to Venezuelan rebels to prevent the democratic elections caused extensive havoc in Venezuela. Two naval bases experienced significant uprisings led by Venezuelan officers sympathetic to the nationalistic stance. In great contrast to the oppressive hard power Cuban leadership demonstrated by Fidel Castro, Venezuelan President Romulo Betancourt chose leniency against the Cuban sympathizers. President Betancourt's soft power approach produced some very interesting results. By 1970 all of the jailed rebels had been freed and some even held positions as Congressmen in Venezuela years after the uprisings.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Ewell, pp. 87.

<sup>118</sup> Kryzanek, pp 34.

<sup>119</sup> Slater, D. and Taylor, P. J. (eds.) (1999). The American Century: Consensus and Coercion in the Projection of American power. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 22.

<sup>120</sup> Rangel, C. (1976). The Latin Americans: Their Love-Hate Relationship with the United States. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 256.

<sup>121</sup> Rangel, pp 253-255.

In 1992, Lt. Col. Chavez was imprisoned for a failed coup attempt in Venezuela against the democratically elected, though allegedly corrupt, president. After two years he was released from prison and went to Argentina and Cuba. What meetings or discussions occurred between Lt. Col. Chavez and Fidel Castro in Cuba are not known. What is obvious from Chavez' trip to Cuba is the close relationship that seemed to have developed between Lt. Col. Chavez and the leader of Cuba. Upon Chavez's return to Venezuela, he traded his military rhetoric for political activism, and again aimed for the presidency. This time, Hugo Chavez chose democratic elections to capture power. Hugo Chavez' successful bid for the presidency in 1998 was marked by one of the largest electoral majorities in Venezuela's recent democratic history.<sup>122</sup>

President Chavez and President Castro's relationship continued to flourish after 1998 to a point that very few would have predicted possible based on the two countries' historic and combative past. Instead of involving itself in Venezuela's military or economic affairs directly, Cuba chose a more subtle soft power approach to its relationship with Venezuela. There are currently thousands of Cuban doctors, teachers, aid workers, and 'advisors' in Venezuela. These aid workers have been dispersed throughout most of Venezuela's poorest communities providing all manners of humanitarian assistance at no charge to the local residents.<sup>123</sup> These soft power aid programs initiated by Chavez and implemented by Castro have in fact been extremely powerful. The programs success<sup>124</sup> can be contrasted with the millions of U.S. dollars provided to independent Venezuelan NGOs by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).<sup>125</sup> Despite this democracy assistance, a majority of Venezuelans decided against removing President Chavez from office during the 2004 Venezuelan presidential

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<sup>122</sup> Buxton, J. (2000, April). Hugo Chavez and Populist Continuity in Venezuela. Dept of Social Science, Kingston University, 3.

<sup>123</sup> *Venezuela Economy: Venezuela and Cuba Trade Oil for Doctors* (2004, October 12). EIU Views Wire Wire-Feed. Retrieved from <http://proquest.umi.com/>. Last visited on December 7, 2004.

<sup>124</sup> The term 'successful' is used from the reference point of public relations. It is currently being debated as to the actual amount of benefit being received by the poor and destitute in Venezuela. Whether true or effective medical and educational benefits are being received by the majority of the poor is not known. What is not being debated is the amount of positive support President Chavez is receiving from the poor majority for the number of programs being introduced regardless of their effectiveness.

referendum. This event directly demonstrates the ability of soft power to be a more effective tool of influence in foreign policy.

### **C. VENEZUELAN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS**

There are many reasons why Venezuela is important to the United States, not least because of oil. The sooner Washington understands Venezuelan politics and the Venezuelan people, the better off both countries will be. The **first 100 years** of U.S. foreign policy in Venezuela (1811 to 1914) was built on a weak foundation. The U.S.-Venezuelan relationship was one of sporadic attention, unexpected consequences, and to a large extent, benign neglect. The United States was not directly interested in Venezuela and usually got involved only when asked repeatedly or when the interest of the United States was at stake. When the U.S. did get involved, it exercised a great deal of hard power either for or in the name of Venezuela. While the U.S. did not always act in the best interest of Venezuela, very few countries would go directly against its own economic interests for the sake of a ‘third world’ nation whose troubles stemmed from mismanagement and corruption. To judge the U.S. as ‘wrong’ would be unfair. To judge U.S. actions as correct or necessary though would be equally unthinking.

The **second 100 years** of relations between Venezuela and the United States was a period replete with missed opportunities and neglect on both sides. Starting with the discovery of oil, U.S.-Venezuelan relations began being built on a stronger foundation of mutual economic dependency, yet it was not nearly as strong as one built on mutual trust and respect. Despite the potential for closer ties through the use of soft power and mutual support, relations of economic dependency bred fear and continued mistrust.

America’s ability and opportunities to positively influence through soft power political assistance, social reform, or economic aid were neglected in the case of Venezuelan. Additionally, the U.S. continued to vacillate between hard power influence and benign neglect. The U.S. government continued to favor economic stability over democratic continuity as an instinctive foreign policy and continued to use its hard power influence to achieve its goals. The United States had a tendency to base its Latin

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<sup>125</sup> The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) is an organization initiated by President Reagan to assist in the development and assurance of continuous support of democracy within other countries. While initiated by the U.S. government, its relatively independent status from governmental control allows it some relative autonomy from eradication or removal by the host nation.



America policy on the “here and now” philosophy. The U.S. would continue to ignore past Venezuelan cooperation, assistance, and support that it had received throughout the past century. The myopic view of the U.S. toward Venezuelan relations has only led to bitter feelings and isolation of a country whose cooperation and natural resources the U.S. can ill-afford to lose.

The predominant U.S. methods of achieving influence in Venezuela has been by purchasing copious amounts of oil and providing Venezuela with a large source of government revenue. This form of influence by the promise of funds or the threat of diminishing funds is categorically hard power. While this form of hard power influence can be imitated by only a very few countries in the world, it has also proven to be much less effective than hoped at encouraging effective long-term relations. Cuba’s increased level of influence on a country so much larger in size, population, and GDP begs the question: is Washington’s approach the right one? Just as applicable a question would be, is Cuba’s current soft power application trumping the United States’ more traditional means of international and hard power global influence?

Cuba’s ability to assert its own form of soft power influence through co-option of the Venezuelan public rather than through coercion is having a greater affect on the hearts and minds of the Venezuelan public than most policy makers in Washington would care to admit. According to Venezuelan government sources, President Castro and President Chavez are merely working for the combined benefit of the poor. These poor are the ones that have been overlooked by the political elites running the country for decades. According to some American sources, there are Cubans in the Venezuelan intelligence agency, Directorate of Intelligence, Department of Military Intelligence, and the Central Bank of Venezuela.<sup>126</sup>

The truth of what is occurring inside Venezuela and the real reason for Cuba’s influence more than likely lies somewhere between what Venezuela and what Washington is saying. The facts of the matter are that Cuba is influencing Venezuela. To what extent or for how long the influence will permeate Venezuelan society and politics is a matter of debate. Who is to blame for this apparent failure of democracy in

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<sup>126</sup> Chardy, A. (2004, May 9). Cubans in Venezuela Worry U.S. *Knight Rider Newspaper*, Nation, A7.

Venezuela – long considered a bastion of democracy? Is there in fact a failure of democracy occurring? Based on the successful completion of the Venezuelan presidential referendum recently held, it would appear that democracy is in fact alive and well in Venezuela. The question is not whether or not democracy will last in Venezuela. The question the United States needs to be asking is what the U.S. could have done to better ensure its influence in a country it needs on so many different matters. Venezuela is important to the United States in the War on drugs. Venezuela's oil is vital to America's economy. Venezuela is playing a very vocal role in the FTAA negotiations – an agreement that many in the Bush administration want. Lastly, Venezuela's relationship with Cuba is vexing and troubling to so many throughout the current U.S. government administration.

The United States continues to have a large soft power and cultural influence throughout the world. While the message it sends out is not always positive, it is still an influence that can be tailored to a certain extent. There should be little wonder as to the existence of such an antagonistic relationship that has developed between the United States and Venezuela. Based on the extensive use of hard power tactics by the U.S. throughout the past 182 year history, it is of little wonder as to the lack of any remaining influence or credibility maintained by the U.S. in that country at all. Should the U.S. decide to seriously note Cuba's soft power influence in Venezuela, it should consider how its future foreign relations should be altered or tailored to take best advantage of the quickly diminishing cultural influence it may have remaining in a country, and a region, so often spurned and ignored.

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## **IV. CONCLUSION**

### **A. SITUATIONAL OVERVIEW**

There is a small window of opportunity to help ensure the success and spread of democratic ideology throughout Brazil and Venezuela. The window of opportunity where both countries are willing to listen and be influenced is small; and both are quickly closing. The Iraq war, while far from over, is neither new nor as large a distraction as it was in early 2003. Saddam Hussein has been found, China is actively engaged in assisting with the North Korean nuclear dilemma, Iran has agreed to suspend its nuclear enrichment program, and Palestinians have agreed to elections to replace the newly deceased Yasser Arafat. President Bush has also been reelected by a clear majority of Americans and acquired an increase in the Republican Party majority in both Houses of Congress. With the Republican Party more firmly controlling Congress, President Bush and his administration have far fewer excuses to not spend more time looking south and offering true cooperation as it was publicly proclaimed and promised during his campaign speeches before the 2000 presidential election.

### **B. SOFT POWER CORRELATIONS**

In Latin America, there is a current and considerable under-utilization of the United States' soft power potential capability. The United States government needs to better understand and learn to execute soft power as a primary strategy instead of as a tactical alternative. The U.S. government's use of hard power should be used more judiciously and only when necessary. Information technology permits and facilitates the distribution of ideas and information at the speed of light. The United States must harness this potential, and while an imprecise political tool, it is one with greater long-term strategic potential than all the guided munitions in the current U.S. arsenal.

Latin America does not present an immediate, clear, or present danger to the United States' national security. This statement is not to imply however that Latin America is neither of any consequence to the United States. The U.S. has demonstrated its support for the theory of pre-emptive war as recently confirmed by Operation IRAQI

FREEDOM. A foreign policy of pre-emptive peace should be given no less consideration.

The significance of pre-emptive peace as a foreign policy is not intended to imply that the U.S. should not consider going to war to defend its national security. On the contrary, a government that would not consider going to war in self-defense is a government that is limiting itself and failing the country they promised to serve and protect. This is particularly true in the case of the United States. By virtue of being the only superpower in the world, it is often called upon to solve so many of the worlds ills via its military might. However, how old is the adage, ‘An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.’?

## **1. Brazil Analysis of U.S. Soft Power**

### ***a. 1930s to 1964***

Prior to and during WWII, the U.S. publicly espoused the use of soft power and the need to work with Brazil as an equal. This verbal stance alone won the U.S. considerable soft power support in Brazil. Despite the soft power rhetoric toward such a ‘strategically vital country as Brazil’, research indicates that following Brazil’s commitment to the Allied Powers and after the defeat of the Axis Powers, the U.S. actually increased its use of hard power. Declassified Top Secret documents mentioned how Congress would intentionally hold badly needed loans from Brazil until compliance with unrelated issues were resolved. The U.S. on more than one occasion bypassed normal diplomatic protocol and directly funded private corporations in Brazil enabling the U.S. to redirect shipments of natural resources destined for other countries and even for plants inside Brazil itself.<sup>127</sup>

There were other forms of hard power application directed against Brazil by the U.S. In the early 1950s, the U.S. let Brazilian President Getulio Vargas know how pleased it was with Britain following its firm and harsh treatment of the Communist Party in British Guyana. Brazil was also informed that financial assistance was directly tied to the level of cooperation with the United States. The logic of using hard power in such a

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<sup>127</sup> Eisenhower, M. (1953, November 20). TOP SECRET National Security Council Progress Report by The Under Secretary of State on the implementation of: *United States Objectives and Courses of Action with Respect to Latin America* (NSC 144/1).

strategically important country as Brazil, after gaining its allegiance, seemed unnecessary. The level of frankness and the hard power extent the U.S. administration was willing to go to manipulate 'friendly allies' and entire governments for post-war policy preferences seemed to actually produce more real harm than potential good. This became evident as Brazil quickly fought to expand its political distance and independence from the U.S after Brazil failed to see political support by the hegemon to the north once hostilities in Europe had ended.

The previous examples of U.S. tactics and those mentioned in the earlier Chapter II on Brazil, indicate a foreign policy wrought with hard power. Based on the research for this thesis, the tendency of the United States has been to use soft power for more tactical objectives rather than for any long term strategically political or ideologically significant goals. Based on the occurrence of a WWII though, it would be difficult to insist that the U.S. government at the time give up all clandestine operations and risk the loss of such potentially valuable resources. While the U.S. situation in a world war and an ideology war with the U.S.S.R. does not excuse in totality all actions of one government against another government that share friendly and mutually beneficial relations, it does help explain it.

While hard power was the predominant policy in place with Brazil during the period from the 1930s to 1964, there were definitive examples of soft power. Cultural exchanges, Hollywood movies, and direct financial assistance (with no contingencies) all played a role in Brazil's increased support of the U.S. war effort. Even these examples of soft power were however muted by the fact that as early as 1945, the United States began decreasing its funding of information programs (a primary source of U.S. soft power projection). The decrease in funding was due to the lack of perceived importance of Brazil as a strategic or even tactical ally. With the foreign policy focus shifting to completing the victory and rebuilding Europe, the U.S. lost complete focus of the economic and political importance of Brazil. The funding that remained was intended to counter the propaganda that was perceived as just beginning to infiltrate Brazil from

the Soviet Union.<sup>128</sup> Again, the soft power exercised by the U.S. was based on a tactical threat vice strategic ideology.

Despite the less-than-optimum tactically orientated soft power approach by the United States throughout the war, the final outcome can be regarded as successful. This success is qualitatively measured strictly by the fact that the Allied Powers won WWII. The U.S. cultural affect in Brazil was a noticeable factor and did help garner some badly needed support for the U.S. While it can be argued that the United States' use of hard power was more excessive than probably necessary, that judgment would be based predominantly on a perfect hind-sight perspective. That the U.S. lost strategic advantages by reducing soft power efforts in Brazil is less debatable. Despite Brazil's cooperation with the U.S. due in large part to the U.S. tactical soft power influence in the country, America still managed to end the period with bitter feelings on the part of Brazil.

***b. 1965 to 1991***

The Alliance for Progress initiated by President Kennedy in 1961 may be considered an example of U.S. soft power. This assessment though would be based only on a very superficial examination of the program. The Alliance for Progress program continued until 1967. Despite six years and over \$22 billion in loans, grants, and matching funds from other countries, the program's final results were far from encouraging or spectacular.<sup>129</sup> The program's noble goals of lifting an entire hemisphere out of poverty and transporting it to a state of self rule were not merely lofty, but ultimately unrealistic.<sup>130</sup>

Hard power tactics proliferated under the Alliance for Progress banner. Hard power initiatives were implemented by the U.S. military, CIA, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). It was the USAID that was designated to be primarily responsible for the execution of the program.<sup>131</sup> The USAID was neither

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<sup>128</sup> Eisenhower, M. (1953, November 20). TOP SECRET National Security Council Progress Report by The Under Secretary of State on the implementation of: *United States Objectives and Courses of Action with Respect to Latin America* (NSC 144/1).

<sup>129</sup> Figures reprinted in Scheman, L. R. (ed) (1988). *The Alliance for Progress: A Retrospective*. New York: Praeger Press, 10-11.

<sup>130</sup> Lowenthal, pp 72.

<sup>131</sup> Levinson and De Onis, pp 109.

prepared financially nor logistically to effectively carry out such a Herculean task with such unrealistic and unattainable goals.

By 1967, after the Alliance for Progress had been in place for five years, nine military coups had occurred displacing constitutional and civilian governments.<sup>132</sup> The largest shortcoming of the program and its eventual demise was demonstrated by the contradictory policies it put into action. Despite its publicly touted goals of economic growth, democracy, equality, education, health, and development,<sup>133</sup> there was an additional section of the plan that was not publicized. That section discussed the use of the program for countering the Cuban revolution and defense against communism.<sup>134</sup> The plan all but gave the CIA and other governmental agencies the needed authorization to conduct operations 'as necessary' to ensure the successful implementation of the Alliance for Progress as they saw fit. Despite President Kennedy's public policy for fairness and equality for all people in the hemisphere, even he was not above using the CIA or opposed to covert operations when he could be convinced as to its benefits.<sup>135</sup>

During this period of Cold War tensions, there was a particular concern and dilemma. The thought process of the presidential administration at the time was that by insisting on democracy in any of the Latin America countries, the U.S. administration risked alienating those country's authoritarian leaders and thereby pushing them and their countries into the ideological camps of the U.S.S.R. This fear was precisely expressed when President Kennedy was quoted as saying, "There are three possibilities in descending order of preference: a decent democratic regime, a continuation of the Trujillo regime (Dominican Republic), or a Castro regime. We ought to aim at the first, but we really can't renounce the second until we are sure that we can avoid the third."<sup>136</sup> Despite Kennedy's own intent for the Alliance for Progress, the reality he faced forced him to modify his own diplomatic masterwork.

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<sup>132</sup> Lowenthal, pp 78.

<sup>133</sup> Levinson and De Onis, pp 8-9.

<sup>134</sup> Levinson and De Onis, pp 7.

<sup>135</sup> Blum, W. (1995). Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Intervention Since World War II. Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 146.

<sup>136</sup> Schlesinger, A. M., Jr. (1965). A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 769.



Land reform in Latin America, one of the largest factors in contributing to inequality, gave way as a goal in the Alliance for Progress in favor of defending the U.S. interests against communism. Despite the lofty intent of the Alliance, it succumbed to its own weight and size. By the very nature of its immensity in scope, the lack of directional supervision and leadership allowed the program to loose focus. The multiple groups attempting to gain access to the billions of dollars allocated for the program, both in the U.S. and Latin America inevitably diluted its effectiveness. Most the organizations' involved attempted to implement the program based on individual objectives thereby creating redundancy and ambiguity. In many cases, this created more harm than good both politically and in the initial aspirations of the program. Of course part of the problem entailed entities in Latin America that did not necessarily want the Alliance for Progress to even succeed. There were those in Latin America that saw the program as threat and would loose influence and power if it actually succeeded. The Alliance for Progress having started as a soft power approach and intent, culminated as a tool for hard power methodology by many of the very players that were suppose to be implementing it.

During this same time period, the United States was supplying Brazil and its military dictatorship a record amount of economic aid. The amount of economic and military aid to Brazil alone increased from just over \$500 million during 1946 to 1955, to over \$3.2 billion between 1956 and 1976.<sup>137</sup> This hard power increase in financial assistance from the U.S. 'bought' short term cooperation from the military elite ruling Brazil at the time. As stated earlier in the thesis, this method of hard power did not provide any long term benefits or influence. The hard power economic and military assistance from the U.S. was used for tactical persuasion in Brazil and provided nothing in the way of future support from the general population. No thought was given by the U.S. administration as to the long-term consequences of its hard power policy once the military dictatorship ended and civilians reestablished democratic rule.

The remainder of the period was a series of increases and decreases in financial and politic support for Brazil. U.S. foreign policies changed so often that it left Brazilian leaders (as well as the rest of Latin America for that matter) completely

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<sup>137</sup> Mott, pp 107.

confused as to what the U.S. administration really wanted or expected. A lot of the policies that were in place during the Kennedy administration were changed when the Johnson administration came in. President Johnson adopted a policy of accepting governments and regime-types in whatever form or manner they came to power. President Nixon and Dr. Kissinger's policy became one of general benign neglect. Latin Americans finally thought they were able to distinguish a policy pattern from the United States.

When President Carter was elected in 1976 and the United States foreign policy took another sharp turn, Latin America was again taken by surprise. The focus of the Carter administration was principally human rights. President Carter's tactics were predominantly hard power economic sanctions against any country that had extensive human rights abuses. Brazil quickly became a target of the United States' new focus. Prior to the U.S. threatening to withhold military aid though, Brazil executed a surprising preemptive political maneuver. Despite the real potential for severe U.S. hard power consequences, Brazil pulled out of the United States' Military Assistance Program, which it had participated in since the 1950s. Even though Brazil did not want to sever all ties with the U.S., it was obviously not afraid to demonstrate its independence.

President Carter's use of hard power through economic sanctions forced a division between the U.S. government and many of the authoritarian leaders in Latin America. The Carter administration's human rights policies had an additional and unexpected result. By rigidly enforcing hard power economic sanctions against authoritative regimes, President Carter concurrently planted contradicting impressions of the U.S. onto the leadership in the oppressive regimes and upon a generation of those being oppressed and imprisoned in Brazil. The repressive leadership saw U.S. policy as a blatant use of offending hard power tactics. Those being oppressed by the regimes saw America's human rights policy enforcement as soft power influence, giving them an appreciation and admiration for the U.S. Twenty years later when the persecuted generation came to power, it remembered the emphasis of human rights pursued by the United States. The favorable soft power influenced developed by the U.S. in those

oppressed in the 1970s actually allowed the United States to enjoy an increase in support from Brazil in the UN during the 1990s.<sup>138</sup>

In 1980 when President Reagan won the White House, the right wing military dictators were again in the favor with the United States' government. It is commonly known that the Reagan administration used hard power to garner cooperation in whatever form the White House needed at the time. An example of this hard power would be the CIA's mining of Nicaragua's harbors in 1984. With President Reagan's main focus on Central America, he attempted to enlist the aid of South America (to include specifically Brazil) to provide support for his crusades. The hard power used extensively and liberally during this period though was ineffectual in garnering firm support for the United States in the region.<sup>139</sup>

Interestingly, it was during the early 1980s when the third wave of democracy began to be felt in Latin America. Since the Reagan administration had only been in place for barely a year and its support for authoritarian regimes in the region is well documented, any inference to his administration or his policies being remotely responsible for the break out of democracy in the region would be doubtful at best. By the early eighties, Brazil had already started its shift from military dictatorship to civilian rule, so this new policy was not a defining factor in returning democracy to Brazil either. It would be equally challenging to provide concrete evidence proving that the Carter administration and its human rights efforts were directly responsible for the democratic wave in Latin America. Based on timing and the popularity of President Carter's stance on human rights however, it is a more credible assertion that Carter's hard power tactics at curbing abuses in Latin America (that produced soft power influence) were more responsible for the eventual push toward democracy than President Reagan's hard power tactics of supporting dictatorial regimes. It would seem that despite the intentions or claims of the U.S. government, its political influence and use of hard power as a reason for the regional shift toward democracy was far less a factor than they would have everyone believe.

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<sup>138</sup> Nye, J. S., Jr. (2004). Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics. Perseus Books Group, 13.

<sup>139</sup> Lowenthal, pp 106.

*c. 1992 to 2004*

There are many different factors to consider during this period of Brazilian and American relations. In the last nine years, U.S. military and economic aid have increased; military aid increasing at a faster rate.<sup>140</sup> The USAID Freedom Rating for Brazil is currently at the same level as during its military dictatorship in 1981. The percentage of Brazilians that believe democracy is a preferable form of government has decreased from 50% in 1996 to 37% in 2004.<sup>141</sup> These statistics do not demonstrate resounding support for democracy from Brazil, the largest and most economically powerful country in Latin America. The numbers are even more dismal in reference to the nearly \$200 million the United States, the world's most powerful democracy, has provided for Brazil in economic and military assistance since as recently as 1996.<sup>142</sup>

A question must be asked. In what areas does the U.S. carry influence within Brazil? More specifically, can the U.S. provide a more favorable view of itself and therefore democracy in general? In direct reference to these questions comes the concern over the FTAA negotiations. Currently, the largest obstacle between the U.S. and Brazil in these FTAA negotiations is the farm subsidies that the U.S. provides to its farmers. The subsidies allow U.S. producers to sell goods overseas at a much reduced rate than would be possible if produced and sold in Brazil. This has the affect of forcing many Brazilian farmers out of business due to Brazilian farmer's inability to compete. The WTO has ruled against the U.S. with its steel tariffs, cotton subsidies, and most recently, the United States' Byrd Amendment.<sup>143</sup> On all the above mentioned legal actions against

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<sup>140</sup> Latin America Working Group Education Fund (2003, August). *Trends in U.S. Military Programs with Latin America & Challenges to Oversight*. Retrieved from <http://www.globalpolicy.org/soecon/developed/oda/2003/08uslatam.pdf>, last accessed November 19, 2004.

<sup>141</sup> *An Alarm Call...*

<sup>142</sup> *Trends in U.S. Military Programs...*

<sup>143</sup> Under the [Continued Dumping and Subsidy Offset Act of 28 October 2000](#), (also known as the Byrd amendment), the US government distributes the anti-dumping and anti-subsidies duties to the US companies that brought forward the cases. Offset payments are theoretically paid to cover expenses such as investment in manufacturing facilities and acquisition of technology, incurred after the imposition of the anti-dumping and anti-subsidy measures. The law raised immediate and widespread concerns. On September 16, 2002, the WTO panel recommended the repeal of the Byrd amendment after upholding the key arguments that the Byrd Amendment held an illegal response against dumping and subsidization. Offset payments constitute a remedy in addition to the imposition of an anti-dumping or anti-subsidy duty, and this remedy is not envisaged in the WTO legislation. Once dumping or subsidization has been

the United States, Brazil has either been one of the action members or the actual initiator against the U.S.<sup>144</sup> It appears as if all the hard power used by the U.S. and the millions of dollars in economic and military assistance since WWII have not provided the long-term influence needed by the U.S. to secure Brazil's cooperation.

## **2. Analysis of Soft Power Application in Venezuela**

### **a. A. General History**

Despite a long history between the United States and Venezuela, there are specific examples of the United States abandoning Venezuelan democracy. It should be no surprise that Venezuela failed to support the U.S. led invasion upon one of the proclaimed axis's of evil - Iraq. That fact is especially poignant given that Venezuela was once referenced as one of Latin America's Axis of Evils, along with Cuba and Colombia's narcoterrorists.<sup>145</sup> It may appear as a stretch to many Americans to consider the possibility that the United States would ever contemplate invading Venezuela. To the local population, it is perfectly logical to assume that the U.S. would consider invading any member of OPEC (Iraq being the precedent) or any oil-rich nation if there was a threat to one of its vital oil resources. It was even implied by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger that the U.S. would be willing to use force to seize oil fields if the United States' national security was at stake.<sup>146</sup> All these are hard power tactics aimed at influencing Venezuela to comply with the U.S. line of thought through coercion.

After the April 12, 2002 military coup that temporarily removed President Chavez from office, the U.S. took uncharacteristically quick action. Unfortunately, instead of condemning the removal of the country's democratically elected leader, the U.S. chose to recognize the military junta's selection of business leader Pedro Carmon as the presidential replacement. The quick acknowledgement by the U.S. administration of

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established, the offset payments flow automatically and confer a competitive advantage to the US industry, which may be eliminated only if dumping or subsidization has first ceased.

<sup>144</sup> WTO Approves Sanctions Against U.S. (2004, November 28). *The National Business Review*. Retrieved from [http://www.nbr.co.nz/home/column\\_article.asp?id=10822&cid=24&cname=US%20Business](http://www.nbr.co.nz/home/column_article.asp?id=10822&cid=24&cname=US%20Business), last accessed November 28, 2004.

<sup>145</sup> Youngers, C. (2003, June). *The U.S. and Latin America After 9-11 and Iraq*. FPIF Policy Report, pp 1. Retrieved from [www.fpiif.org](http://www.fpiif.org).

<sup>146</sup> Ewell, pp 204.

the militarily picked leader in the 2002 coup and the U.S. administration blaming President Chavez for the coup itself did not engender positive relations between the U.S. and Venezuela.<sup>147</sup> General U.S. policy in Venezuela has not lent itself to long-term understanding and support of United States positions.

Despite America's lack of support for President Chavez, Venezuela has posted some interesting numbers concerning its views on democracy. Since 1996, the percentage of Venezuelans that believe democracy is the best form of government increased from 60% in 1996 to 73% in 2004.<sup>148</sup> An increase in the Venezuelan belief of democracy while the U.S. considers Venezuelan democracy to be diminishing is interesting. Even more interesting is that this increase is contrasted to a marked decrease in Venezuela's political and civil liberty freedoms tracked since 1977 by *Freedom House International*.<sup>149</sup> U.S. influence in Venezuela has conversely decreased during the same period. While a direct correlation can not be corroborated without greater analysis, it provides interesting data to consider in further research.

The United States government has failed to realize and fully appreciate Venezuela's general propensity for democratic political stability (relative to the region). Whether the last 40 years of democracy during the alternating governments of the Democratic Action Party (AD) and the Christian Democratic Party (COPEI) was representative of true democracy in practice or just a shared oligopoly is debatable. Despite this, Venezuela has proven itself as a country that while not always adhering to the letter of the law, has attempted to embrace the spirit of its democratic constitution. It appears at least that in this regard, the citizen's of Venezuela and the United States share a similar feeling: democracy, though approached differently and flawed in many ways, is a system worth fighting for.

The misuse of hard power by the U.S. and Venezuela has demonstrated an important link between these two countries. Despite the rhetoric, the dialogue has not been nearly as important as the flow of oil and money. This is significant in two regards.

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<sup>147</sup> Youngers, pp 3.

<sup>148</sup> *An Alarm Call...*

First, Venezuela is the fourth largest supplier of oil to the United States, supplying approximately 13% of the U.S. annual supply.<sup>150</sup> Oil revenues produce nearly 50% of the Venezuelan government's proceeds. In all the contradicting statistics by *Freedom House*, USAID, or *Latinobarometro* polls concerning the degradation of democracy in Venezuela, neither Venezuela nor the U.S. has discontinued the economic relationship or reliance on each other's money and oil respectively. The second point is that political relations have not been discontinued despite the Bush administration's recognition of the military junta's presidential figurehead or President Chavez visiting Fidel Castro and Saddam Hussein. The United States' need for Venezuela's oil and Venezuela's need for America's money is taking priority over most other international issues.

### Cuba

Another factor in U.S. – Venezuelan relations is the Cuban influence in Venezuela. Cuba has started to exert an increased amount of soft power influence in Venezuela. By providing over 10,000 of doctors, health workers, advisors, and teachers, Cuba has been given near-carte blanche to Venezuela's military, intelligence, and intellectual infrastructure.<sup>151</sup> Conversely, President Chavez has been using anti-American sentiment as a political tool elevating himself on the back of American political contradictions and the United States' propensity for unilateralism in its military and political objectives.<sup>152</sup>

Venezuela and Cuba shared an extremely antagonistic history as pointed out earlier in this analysis. Despite the two country's antagonistic history, Cuba's recent soft power application has given it a greater role in Venezuelan politics than that of the United States'. Regardless the United States' economic, military, and cultural hard power might, it appears defenseless in stopping Venezuela from visiting Cuba, Iraq, and Libya. Even with the U.S. hard power tactics of providing over a million dollars to NED

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<sup>149</sup> Karatnycky, A. (2003, July 8). Freedom in the World 2003: Liberty's Expansion in a Turbulent World – Thirty Years of the Survey of Freedom. New York: Freedom House. Retrieved from <http://www.freedomhouse.org/research/freeworld/2003/akessay.htm>, last accessed November 29, 2004.

<sup>150</sup> Hill, J. T. (2004, March 24). Testimony, United States Army Commander, United States Southern Command, before the House Armed Services Committee, United States House of Representatives.

<sup>151</sup> Chardy.

<sup>152</sup> Forero, J. (2004, August 20). The Chavez Victory: A Blow to the Bush Administration. *The New York Times*, A13.

(which financially supported the Chavez opposition), President Chavez still won the presidential referendum in August 2004.

The U.S. is not just losing influence in Venezuela; it is being set back by at least a generation. Cuban teachers are setting the educational agenda and curriculum for Venezuelan children. Cuban doctors are living in the poorest sections of Venezuelan cities attending to the very sick and more importantly, the very young and influential. Cuban ‘advisors’ are also working with the Venezuelan military and intelligence departments. U.S. military advisors are being kicked out of specific and long-occupied offices and bases in Venezuela.<sup>153</sup> U.S.–Venezuelan military exercises are being cancelled and U.S. privileges in the war on drugs and terrorism such as over-flight authority is being curtailed. In twenty years there will be a generation of Venezuelan’s who will have been raised under an anti-American atmosphere and influenced by anti-American Cuban teachers, doctors, and advisors. These Venezuelans will be in power controlling their nation’s oil supply, making decisions on their countries drug policies, trade policies, and making international agreements with countries such as Brazil, Libya, Iraq, and China.

The U.S. alienated Lt. Col. Hugo Chavez as a coup leader in 1992, as a presidential candidate in 1998, and as a president in 2002. The U.S. was justified in alienating a coup leader and perhaps justified in being cautious concerning Chavez as a ‘candidate’. The U.S. fell short though in failing to support him as a democratically elected president. While the U.S. did not perhaps push Chavez to Cuba, it certainly gave him no reason to consider the United States as a viable alternative. The U.S. application of hard power in Venezuela has proven to be of no long-term effectiveness and has actually proven to be a source of anti-Americanism that has only aided those opposed to America’s perceived hegemony. Tracing the effectiveness of Cuba’s soft power application only further demonstrates that despite the United States’ military and economic superiority, it may be Cuba’s soft power that is proving a much more effective method of influence.

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<sup>153</sup> Lindsay-Poland, J. (2004, August). U.S. Military Bases in Latin America and the Caribbean. *Foreign Policy in Focus (FPiF)*, Policy Brief, 9, 3, 1. Retrieved from [www.fpiif.org](http://www.fpiif.org), last accessed December 15, 2004.



## C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Along with a historical propensity for vacillating foreign policy, the United States has a tendency for attempting one-size fits-all solutions: the *Washington Consensus*<sup>154</sup> is a perfect example of this. The following recommendations should not be viewed as simply “The” plan or approach to all the countries in Latin America. No plan should be executed until the very specific idiosyncrasies and problems and uniqueness of the situation is thoroughly analyzed and all options considered. One-size-fits-all may be acceptable in reference to certain fashion accessories, but not for an international approach to U.S. foreign policy in the promotion of American democratic ideals in countries as varied as those represented by Brazil and Venezuela.

### 1. Soft Power Old & New

There were many tactics that the United States employed to boost its soft power cultural influence. Regrettably, the U.S. disarmed itself of some of its most effective soft power means years ago in lieu of hard power implementation. The United States has proven itself very capable of producing quick hard power results. For examples of this, the reader need only reference past U.S. policy efforts with Dollar Diplomacy, Gunboat Diplomacy, U.S. Marines in Nicaragua, and the Cuban Embargo to re-familiarize oneself with less than successful hard power politics of the United States.

Some of the more successful soft power tools used by the United States in the past have been Radio Free Europe, Voice of America, Radio Liberty, and the CIA sponsored Congress for Cultural Freedom. The United States Information Agency (USIA)<sup>155</sup> and the Arab Service Section of Voice of America were abolished despite their effectiveness and should be reconstituted for implementation in Latin America.

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<sup>154</sup> The term “Washington Consensus” was originally coined in 1990 by an economist by the name of John Williamson. The phrase has come to be used interchangeably with terms such as “neoliberalism” and “globalization”. Some of the policies proposed by the Washington Consensus were: fiscal discipline, tax reform, trade liberalization, privatization, deregulation, and the securing of property rights. Based more on the execution of the plan rather than the idea, the term itself has become a lightning rod for anti-globalizers, trade negotiators, and many developing country politicians. For more information on the Washington Consensus, see: <http://www.cid.harvard.edu/cidtrade/issues/washington.html> last visited on November 16, 2004.

<sup>155</sup> The USIA was absorbed into the U.S. Department of State in 1999.

## **2. National Endowment for Democracy**

The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) needs some reconsideration and adjustments based on two specific concerns. NED's first concern is based on the reduced funding which barely allows it to continue to operate, much less operate successfully.<sup>156</sup> Secondly, NED's neutrality in Venezuela is in jeopardy based on how direct recipients of NED funds were put into positions of governmental power during the two day coup that removed President Chavez from office in April 2002. NED provides a very useful purpose in many countries, to include Venezuela. However, if the U.S. is going to fund an organization, it is incumbent on the government to ensure those funds are used for the purpose intended.

## **3. Supra-National Organizations**

The United States must actively engage and involve the supra-national organizations in any affair larger than a bilateral agreement. Some of these associations are the Organization of American States (OAS), the European Union (EU), NATO, the United Nations (UN), World Trade Organization (WTO), and even the World Health Organization (WHO). The U.S should not engage these organizations merely for the purpose of providing an increased air of legitimacy. This author is not recommending that the United States forfeit its sovereignty or right of self-defense for the sake of winning a popularity contest. Nor should the United States submit its national defense policies and plans to a 'global test' to ascertain its viability in the opinion pages of the world press. The United States should however, be cognizant of world opinion and take appropriate steps to counter anticipated negative publicity and be able to explain its actions as necessary or appropriate. This is not recommended for justification of its actions, but to better establish a consensus and improve the odds of international support as necessary for the conflict or issue.

## **4. U.S. and OAS**

Despite 50 years of predominately hard power application and near-total hegemony in the region, the United States does not maintain dominant control even within its own self-proclaimed sphere of influence. The United States' influence in a

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<sup>156</sup> Kampelman, pp 624.

relatively minor supra-national organization such as the OAS is far from complete. In the 30 cases that have involved the Rio Treaty, the OAS, or Resolution-1080,<sup>157</sup> only six times did the United States unconditionally get its way without having to compromise with any of the other countries. Of those six times, three dealt specifically with Cuba and one was a unilateral action against the organization when the U.S. chose to go into Panama to remove President Noriega for drug trafficking.<sup>158</sup>

The United States must engage the OAS any and every time it needs to take action in Latin America. Involving the OAS not only provides legitimacy and increases dialog among all members, but provides greater communication and support for the OAS thereby increasing strength to an organization whose very charter currently supports the consolidation of democracies.

## **5. The Internet Conundrum and 10 Other Options**

The internet, while incredibly powerful and instantaneous, is not the panacea that some would like to think. In 1998, 100 million people used the Internet. Some experts even predict that by the end of 2005, that number will increase to one billion people. Even if that is true, that ignores over five billion people who will not have access. In fact, three-quarters of the world's population does not own a phone, much less a modem and computer.<sup>159</sup> While the number of internet cafes and public libraries with internet access are growing in number, the internet is still not as ubiquitous as some believe. So, while the Internet should be utilized to the maximum extent possible, the U.S. needs to ensure that it does not become 'Plan-A.'

Listed below are 10 soft power related possibilities that the United States should consider to cultivate a better image of itself in Latin America. By increasing its efforts to spread western ideals through appropriate soft power methods, the United States could reclaim the cultural revolution that it once professed before the U.S. became too important to bother with programs that encouraged 'direct marketing' of American ideals person-to-person.

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<sup>157</sup> Resolution-1080 is a regional security agreement signed during the Santiago Declaration in 1991.

<sup>158</sup> Shaw, C. M. (2003, Fall). Limits to Hegemonic Influence on the Organization of American States. *Latin America Politics and Science*, 45, 3, 59.

<sup>159</sup> Keohane and Nye, pp 81.

- 1) Reopening of American Centers. During WWII, American Centers were situated in most of the major cities in Europe. These should be reopened near U.S. Embassies (NOT in them) throughout Latin America. The American Centers should go beyond the expected and anticipated propaganda and provide an actual area and resources for which people can view different ideas, culture, and better appreciate what the democratic and free-world has to offer. The best way to positively influence a culture in favoring a specific ideology would be by not being afraid to show other ideas and options. By better insuring and supplying well-rounded sources of information, the U.S. also reduces the chance of these centers being vandalized or targeted by anti-American groups. If these centers are attacked, then the appropriate U.S. agency(s) should be prepared with media files to accentuate the diversity of the information denied locals and how the perpetrators are damaging the local community, not the U.S. There is an incredible amount of soft power strength in demonstrating open-mindedness and a lack of fear of other ideas and options.
- 2) Assist Brazil and Venezuela in land reform. This issue is one of the major contributing factors for both, slowed growth and wealth inequality. Through land reform and the judicial processes ensuring fairness and equality, the U.S. could provide a major supporting role. Success for Brazil on this front may allow the opportunity for the U.S. to garner success in other areas such as the FTAA. In that same venue, Venezuela also suffers from land ownership inequality – though not to the same extent as Brazil. By assisting Venezuela and Brazil logistically, judicially, legally, and even financially (to only a certain extent), the U.S. would not only help provide stability among the 47% of the population below the poverty line in Venezuela,<sup>160</sup> but would be building the foundation for a generations worth of support through soft power influence.
- 3) Extend, encourage, and support existing foreign exchange programs: agriculture, economic, political, and cultural (arts, music, dance, etc...). Not just talk about, but demonstrate to Brazilian and Venezuelan nationals what the United States is truly about rather than what they may simply get from their television sets

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<sup>160</sup> CIA – The World Factbook. Retrieved from <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ve.html#Econ>, last accessed December 12, 2004.

watching such globally popular shows as *Dallas* or *Baywatch*. Exchange programs increases the person-to-person contact that proves so much more successful than what may be garnered of U.S. cable networks.<sup>161</sup>

- 4) Improve access for foreign exchange students to American institutions. This type of exchange program (with the appropriate screening procedures as per the “9/11 Commission”) would allow more Latin Americans to get an American education in both the academic as well as the ideological sense. The goal would not be indoctrination of foreign students, but cooption through familiarization. More effective and efficient procedures for screening can be put in place that should allow for increased enrollment without sacrificing security. This is being implemented at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in Monterey, CA. NPS is expecting to increase enrollment of International officers by at least 30% over the next couple of years.<sup>162</sup> If the Department of defense is able to recognize the importance of Educational exchange experience, then the State Department should also be made aware of its importance.
- 5) Institute increased U.S. Cross-Cultural Education and understanding for *Americans*. Improved education would apply to both U.S. government as well as military representatives assigned to Latin American positions. By enhancing cultural training, United States representatives such as Foreign Service Officers, governmental delegates, and even military envoys would be able to put a better face on a U.S. culture more receptive and appreciative of a Latin American country’s unique history, culture, and language. Additionally, better staffing of embassy and political offices would provide better services to all customers, not just American customers in a foreign country. The adage of doing more with less should not apply to the American mission; whether that mission is in Iraq or in reference to properly staffing American Diplomatic offices representing the United States and serving the world.

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<sup>161</sup> Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. What The World Thinks In 2002-How Global Publics View: Their Lives, Countries, The World, and America. Washington, D.C.: The Pew Global Attitudes, 55-56. Retrieved from [www.people-press.org](http://www.people-press.org), last accessed December 15, 2004.

<sup>162</sup> The increase in enrollment of international students was a topic of discussion in an NPS Marketing class (GB3030) on December 9, 2004.

- 6) Revitalize American youth involvement abroad.<sup>163</sup> The United States should revitalize programs such as its *Points of Light* program established by President H.W. Bush, *Ameri-Core* established by President Clinton, the *Peace Corps*, and of course military enlistment. These programs would provide insight into the positive ideals of Americanism at the grass roots level with no hidden agenda other than to aid another country (more applicable through the *Peace Corps* and *Ameri-Core* than the military). This could be the most effective form of soft power available to the United States next to its fashion, movies, and television programming. Again, nothing is as effective as person-to-person communication, contact, and assistance.
- 7) Encourage NGO's to provide aid, assistance, and education. NGOs have mushroomed in numbers and capacity within the last several years alone. Their ability to reach into a culture has become very effective. Through the appropriate amount of cooperation between the State Department and NGO's, the number of people that can be reached and the potential positive effect directly into the culture is immense. It must be caution that the potential for fraud and abuse inside NGOs also exists. A definitive amount of oversight would be required to ensure minimum waste of funds as well as ensuring that the specified NGOs stayed on message and intent.
- 8) Provide direct assistance to increase Education in targeted countries. Investment of human resources is some of the best long-term investments that a developing country can make. The United States needs to target some of its assistance directly at this goal to assist and encourage countries to make that commitment to its own future. In fact, it is this very program that has many administrators in the White House so concerned about Venezuela. Cuba is assisting Venezuela with the very thing that the U.S. recommends all countries attempt to do – increase provided education. The fact that it is Cuba in Venezuela and not the U.S. is a concern for which the U.S. can only blame itself.

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<sup>163</sup> Finn, pp17.

- 9) Increase Coordination among U.S agencies in an attempt to improve the efficacy of all programs. The Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) <sup>164</sup> attempts to do this by its own regulations. However, the MCA disqualifies most Latin American countries from its programs. This disqualification is due to the minimum requirements to be a fund recipient and how most Latin American countries are not quite destitute enough to meet these requirements. As a result, only Haiti, Nicaragua, and Honduras have qualified as recipients for any funds from the MCA in the last year.<sup>165</sup> The United States can either choose to help Latin America onto the side of increasing prosperity or continue to ignore the majority of its own hemisphere and allow it to slide back into another ‘lost decade’ as it continues its left shift into authoritarian democracies.
- 10) Reduce the large subsidies currently in place for U.S. farmers and allow greater market access in the U.S. The U.S. needs to reduce the current level of farm subsidies given to the U.S agricultural sector by a few billion dollars. Since 1995, the U.S. government has provided U.S. farmers with over \$16 billion annually in farm subsidies. Of that \$16 billion, over \$10 billion a year goes toward U.S. growers that compete directly with Brazilian farmers. <sup>166</sup> These figures do not take into account steel and other non-agricultural sectors in which the U.S. and Brazil directly compete against one another. This author is acutely aware of the political difficulty in any attempted execution of decreasing subsidies by a U.S. administration. However, with the current political situation being enjoyed by the GOP controlling the House, the Senate, the Executive branch, having won the American heartland, and the moral right, there would not be a better time to set in motion such a badly needed correction. The United States would have more to gain nationally from improved relations and a better trade agreement with a Latin American country of almost 200 million people than with an additional subsidy increase to any one specific U.S. agricultural sector. The increased trade would

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<sup>164</sup> <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/developingnations/millennium.html>, last accessed November 29, 2004.

<sup>165</sup> <http://www.mca.gov/>, last accessed November 30, 2004.

<sup>166</sup> Environmental Working Group. Farm Subsidy Database. <http://www.ewg.org/farm/region.php?fips=00000>, last accessed December 8, 2004.

also be more beneficial in the long-term for both countries. Perpetuation of farm subsidies allows American farmers to remain relatively insulated from global competition. The subsidies received removes many of the incentives for U.S. farmers have to improve competitively and it further removes incentives to develop more effective and efficient ways of producing. U.S. subsidies prevent the very efficacy that the U.S. attempts to force many Latin America countries to do through the Washington Consensus. Through greater market access, Brazil and Venezuela (as well as the rest of Latin America) would be able to increase its own government income. Increased government income would allow the countries to better repay foreign debt. In turn, increased government revenue would allow the countries more freedom to funnel money toward investing in the infrastructure of the country and in human capital without having to borrow as much from global institutions. Additionally, more goods at a cheaper price would be available to the average American consumer.<sup>167</sup>

#### **D. THE 10-OPTION SUMMATION**

Some of the biggest concerns that the United States has with Brazil and Venezuela are when they attempt to act as the United States did almost 100 years ago. These two large and influential countries are demanding special privileges, recognition, and autonomy. They are expecting to be consulted in all international matters that reference or effect their sphere of influence - all of which the United States bellowed toward Europe with the *Monroe Doctrine* and the *Roosevelt Corollary* to the Monroe Doctrine 100 years ago.

The United States needs to understand that democracy (whatever the form it may take or by whatever definition the reader may chose) does NOT come with a guarantee. Democracy is not something you can buy and have delivered in a pre-packaged container with a warranty stating that ‘it will comply with U.S. doctrine and wishes’. True democracy is a double edged sword. On the one side, it allows a country to make

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<sup>167</sup> This program does not even take into account the corollary benefits Brazil and Venezuela would receive from encouraging their agricultural sectors to revitalize themselves.



‘collective’ decisions on what is best for that country. The other side of the issue is the understanding that the path chosen by a specific democracy may not directly coincide with the wishes of the United States.

The U.S. has been predominantly concerned with what is best for the U.S. That does not make it evil or vile. It makes the U.S. normal in the political process that its government makes in reference to foreign and domestic policy decisions. It does make the United States normal in its attempts to take care of its people and the constituents of its politicians. Unfortunately, history is wrought with ‘normal’ national leaders making decisions for their countries to the detriment of all others.

If the U.S. wants to demonstrate a ‘passionate conservative’ tendency, then it needs to make decisions that are in the region’s best interest, not just the best interest of the people of one country. If attempting to do what is best for a region were truly the intent of the U.S., then the U.S. would not have interfered with agrarian reforms in Guatemala in the 1950’s or in Brazil in the early 1960’s. The United States should discontinue its policy of benign neglect in countries such as Brazil and Venezuela. The sad fact of the matter is that the United States has done very little to help the outside world better understand Americans, the United States, and its culture.

The U.S. government has been predominantly hands off in the exportation of U.S. culture for the last half century. The government has left cultural exportation to the “wisdom” of Hollywood executives and corporations such as Nike®, Coca-Cola®, and McDonald’s®. Based on the over-whelming anti-Americanism spreading across the globe, perhaps the U.S. government should pay closer attention to the messages being exported and more importantly listen to the responses to those messages. Do Americans want the world to think they are strictly *Baywatch*, McDonalds®, and Britney Spears, or in contrast, Disney®, CNN®, and Microsoft®? This paper does not support the U.S. government regulating the media industry. Perhaps though, a better understanding and appreciation for the impact the U.S. culture has on the world, much less Latin America, would better serve the long term needs of the entire United States of America.

## E. CONCLUSION

We seek not just neighbors, but strong partners. We seek not just progress, but shared prosperity. With persistence and courage, we shaped the last century into an American century. With leadership and commitment, this can be the centuries of the Americas....Should I become President, I will look south, not as an afterthought, but as a fundamental commitment to my presidency.<sup>168</sup>

Gov. George W. Bush (R-TX)

The above statement was obviously given before the attack on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon. Since “9/11” Latin America has once again taken a back seat on the United States’ agenda as it has for over 100 years. The U.S. presidential administration needs to reconsider its approach toward Latin America and in particular Brazil and Venezuela. The U.S. also needs to work on being more pro-active rather than reactive in reference to Latin American political and foreign policy issues. This author does not profess to be intimately familiar with all the programs and initiatives in reference to the development and improvements in Latin America. What this author is able to state based on exhaustive research, is that the efficacy and coordination of these many programs have failed to reach the *publicly stated* goal of achieving stable democracies in Latin America.

Latin America is not the United States’ backyard, but its neighbor. The U.S. needs to spend more time cooperating with Latin America or ruthlessly discover that other countries may join Brazil and Venezuela in their present march to the political left (or more ‘populist’ leanings<sup>169</sup>). The political left tendency being experienced in Latin America could indicate the start of a faster development towards *radical populism*<sup>170</sup> or even worse, another reverse wave of democracy.<sup>171</sup> As Brazil continues to develop

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<sup>168</sup> Johnson, G. (2000, August 26). Bush Stresses Latin America as U.S. Priority, Pushing ‘Special Relationship’ with Mexico. *Boston Globe*, A1.

<sup>169</sup> As discussed in NS-4510, “Seminar in Latin American Governments and Politics” with DR. Harold Trinkunas, December 08, 2003.

<sup>170</sup> Hill, pp 1.

<sup>171</sup> “Reverse Wave” is in reference to Samuel Huntington’s 1992 well published theory of global waves of democracy; the “Third Wave” beginning with the democratization in Spain, collapse of the Soviet Union, and the systematic replacement of military and authoritarian regimes in Latin America by democratically elected leaders.

industrially and economically, it is finding itself able to negotiate more effectively with a wider assortment of international players who are more than willing to offer assistance. International assistance, cooperation, or influence toward Brazil and Venezuela may come from the EU, China, Cuba, and perhaps unwittingly, Al Qaeda. What the United States *can* do is choose whether it is going to sincerely cooperate with its neighbors to the south. What the United States cannot afford to do is to loose its ability to influence who these neighbors turn to if the U.S. decides it is again too busy or too pre-occupied to listen to its neighbors to the south.

Venezuela's President is teetering between democracy and dictatorship. What has the United States done to help a country upon who it has become reliant; not just in economic cooperation, but as a major oil supplier? While divesting the United States' heavy oil interests in Venezuela makes sense for Americans, it fails to answer the original question. Brazil is increasingly exercising regional influence and no longer with the United States' interests in mind. President Chavez in Venezuela has shown his ability to survive and even prosper despite Washington's apparent disdain for this national leader. In fact, the United States' dislike of President Hugo Chavez only makes him more popular in the entire region.

Two thousand years ago, by the very nature of its soft power cultural influence, the Roman Empire was able to spread its customs, philosophies, laws, arts, and traditions throughout the known world. The United States should attempt this same feat concentrating on the good of democracy and human rights. It needs to do this through cooption rather than coercion. President Bush has been re-elected and must now act immediately to initiate these programs to maximize the United States' cultural soft power. The current administration needs to spread the ideas, culture, and beliefs of the largest, most powerful country in the world. If President Bush does not act now, in four years the next President pre-occupied with winning a second term in office certainly will not and eight years will be lost in achieving these essential reforms. If this becomes the case, then the United States will merely continue down the same path as so many other crumbled world empires throughout history, and despite the United States' potential to achieve greatness and be a large part of world history, it risks regulating itself to being only a mere footnote.

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